

Concordia Theological Monthly

Vol. XIX

AUGUST, 1948

No. 8

The Universal Priesthood and the Pastor

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I. DOCTRINAL DEFINITIONS

A. *The Universal Priesthood.* The centennial year of our Synod re-emphasized the doctrine of the royal priesthood. The Missouri Synod, and before it the Saxon settlement, regarded itself as a Church because of the universal priesthood. That principle was given a fresh statement in the Reformation, and is a particular heritage of the Lutheran Church. The growth of our Church and the routinizing of its ministry causes this principle to lose some of its vitality. One would expect the laity of the Church to be more energetic than the ministry in safeguarding this principle. Actually we need not expect this to be the case. It is the ministry itself which must take up the responsibility for preserving this principle, and through it for preserving the vitality of the Church as a whole.

1. *The Grace of God in Christ Jesus.* The royal priesthood is not a doctrine separate from the other great facts of the Christian religion, but it is a logical ingredient in our faith as a whole. The Christian faith is the recognition that the heavenly Father has re-established His life in man through Jesus Christ. He sent Him into the world to take upon Himself the burden of man's debt and to free man from the bondage of sin and death.¹

¹ 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Eph. 1:3-4, 7-8; 2:1-9.

2. God redeemed man to Himself, once and for all time, by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross. In itself that sacrifice leaves man still dead. In the hour of the first Good Friday, man did not change. It is the meaning of the redemption on the Cross, however, that God Himself, for His Son's sake, in love seeks the life and salvage, the peace and rescue of every human being. This He does through the means of grace. God in Christ bridged the gap between man and Himself; Christ is the Way. Christ, however, came into the world not only to construct that bridge, but to reveal God's plan and intention. He is the Word of God in which we see God at work and understand the love that God has for us.² But God's plans go further. The Father and the Son seek to bring to man the Spirit, who moves into the heart of man, changes and shapes his mind away from hostility and reluctance toward God to trust and acceptance. This Spirit works faith, the faith to make the redemption of Jesus Christ our very own.³ The channel by which the Spirit goes into man, however, is not left undefined. But God has given men the witness concerning Christ, in the Prophets of the Old Testament and in the accounts of Christ's work and in the message of Christ's Apostles. The Sacred Scriptures are the repository of this witness. In them and through them a man becomes wise unto salvation by faith in Christ Jesus.⁴ This witness, these Scriptures, deal with human words and language, but as those words take hold of the mind, they become the device by which the Spirit of God works the very grace which God worked through the redemption of Jesus Christ. The same process is carried out in the Sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus in the Lord's Supper⁵ and in the washing of Baptism, which is likewise for the remission of sins gained by Jesus Christ;⁶ it is in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

3. When the Holy Spirit, through Word and Sacrament, makes His way into the human heart, it is changed; it becomes a new mind.⁷ God Himself is reinstated in the life of man as

² John 1:1-18; Col. 1:12-22; Heb. 1:1-3.

³ 1 Cor. 1:21-25; 2:9-16.

⁴ 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:23; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1 Pet. 1:22-25.

⁵ 1 Cor. 11:23-29.

⁶ Acts 2:38; Eph. 5:26.

⁷ Eph. 5:8-9; 2:10.

God originally designed. The meaning of this change is not over, however, when the believer accepts the forgiveness of his sins. Rather is that coming to faith but a beginning and a tool for greater and wider goals. The purpose of Christ's redemption and man's salvation is that man should love, that man should assume responsibility for man even as God has assumed responsibility for him.⁸ The believer lives not for himself; but he is put into the world and left in the world for the purpose of becoming a witness to Christ;⁹ his life is to bear the marks of Christ, to be risen in Christ, for the sake of the world around him, whose people are still in need of that rescue which he has already enjoyed. He is left in the world with the mandate to go and teach, to go and witness. Furthermore, the believer, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, becomes a kinsman with his fellow believer. Together with every fellow believer he constitutes the very body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head. He is bound together with ties of the Spirit, much stronger than ties of blood and earthly kinship, to every other believer.¹⁰ That fellowship is not simply a paper thing. But it is for a purpose. In the body of Christ the believer becomes responsible for the spiritual life also of the fellow believer. He is there to edify and to build up the brother. The graces of the Spirit, in teaching, fellowship, charity, forbearance, thoughtfulness, and considerateness, are all for the sake of helping him to reach out in love to his brother for his good.¹¹ Thus it is that the people of God, the body of Christ, constitute a royal priesthood.¹² The Old Testament priest made sacrifices which prefigured the redemption on the Cross. The New Testament priest no longer does that; that sacrifice is valid once and for all time. But the New Testament priest does offer up the sacrifice of praise to God continually; and with his brother he worships God.¹³ He Himself is the priest in that worship; he needs no intermediary, for Christ has wholly redeemed him to God; in fact not even Christ mediates his prayers to God, but he, a royal priest, lays his prayer before the heavenly Father, and the Spirit of God pleads for him with sighings which

⁸ John 13:16; 1 John 3.

⁹ Luke 24; 2 Cor. 4:6 ff.

¹⁰ Eph. 2:13 ff.; 4:1-7.

¹¹ Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4.

¹² 1 Pet. 2:1 ff.

¹³ Hebrews 10.

cannot be uttered.¹⁴ The Old Testament priest conveyed forgiveness of sins from God to the people. The Christian believer, by virtue of his faith in the Atonement, is assured of that forgiveness. Christ Himself is the great High Priest whose intercession still assures the forgiveness of his sins.¹⁵ But no human being stands between him and God in reaching for that forgiveness; for he is ever assured of the perfect love of God in Christ's redemption and has the perfect confidence that his every sin is forever forgiven.

B. *The Ministry.* The One Thing Needful in the life of the believer is that this presence of the Spirit of God and this hold on the grace of God continue.¹⁶ It is the plot of the Christian's life that this life in God be tested and strengthened by every possible means, so that it have its full strength and achieve its purpose also toward others.¹⁷ That is literally the life-and-death matter for the Christian that he retain this presence and power of God in Christ and exercise it for the life of others. This fact is so important because each Christian still has in him remnants of the sinful flesh, warring against the life of the Spirit within him and leaguely with the world in a conspiracy of death. The Kingdom of God, the One Thing Needful, becomes doubly, therefore, a matter of fear and trembling, the major concern of the Christian's life.¹⁸ To stimulate and implement this concern, God uses the ministry.

1. *The Ministry of the Means of Grace.* Every Christian is a royal priest. As such he has access to God through Christ, and has the tools for strengthening his hold on Christ, namely, the Word and the Sacrament. In the New Testament, however, God has set up a specific ministry of the means of grace. The purpose of this ministry is to feed the flock,¹⁹ that is, to supply the spiritual life of the Christian man with the one replenishing fuel, namely, the Gospel and the Sacrament. This work is co-ordinated with another task. The purpose of the Gospel and the spiritual life is to maintain touch with God, the hold on His very life in the soul; and hence to have continuous forgiveness of sins. Every royal priest has the

¹⁴ John 14:23 ff.; 15:16, 27; 16:23-28; Rom. 8:26-27.

¹⁵ 1 John 2.

¹⁶ Matt. 6:33; Luke 10:38 ff.

¹⁷ 1 Pet. 5:10.

¹⁸ Phil 2:1-16.

¹⁹ Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11-16.

business to express that forgiveness to his believing brother. The Savior in addition, however, systematizes that supply with the Office of the Keys:²⁰ the business not only of announcing grace in general, but of speaking forgiveness to the repentant believer in particular, and of withholding forgiveness expressly from him who expressly rejects it. These two functions, then, the teaching of the Word and the exercise of the keys, become the business of the ministry.²¹

2. *The Congregation and the Pastor.* The Apostles were put into their position by the Savior Himself. He gave them their work, namely, to save people through the Gospel of His redemption. He also prayed for those who would be saved through their word.²² The Apostles helped the first ministry to be organized in the Church. Some of the people whom they appointed were their professional helpers, traveling with them as their messengers and representatives (Timothy, Ephraim). Others they placed into specific localities in order to minister to groups of Christians in those areas.²³ Some of the Apostles themselves carried out the functions of the ministry to congregations (the Apostles in the first church at Jerusalem; St. John at Ephesus). Others served in a missionary capacity, laying the groundwork for congregations which later had their own ministers (St. Paul, St. Peter). Ministers are described in the Word of God by their task, that of feeding the flock to which they minister, of being an example to it, of guiding it, of building it up, of teaching it. Ministers are described as ministers, pastors, overseers. Always it is emphasized that they, too, stand in the relation to God in which every Christian stands; nowhere are they described as having prerogatives or dignities other than those of every Christian. The congregations are asked to undertake the responsibility of providing for the needs of their ministers.²⁴ The congregations are shown at the task of choosing their ministers, assisting them through specially qualified lay members of their group, or through professionally chosen and equipped individuals. The pastors, on the other hand, are shown at work in their dual capacity as servants of God and servants of the people.²⁵

²⁰ John 20:21 ff.

²³ Acts 20; Titus 1:7.

²¹ 1 Cor. 4:1; Heb. 13:7.

²⁴ 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6-7; 1 Cor. 9:14.

²² John 17:20.

²⁵ Acts 2; 4; 6.

II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. *The Early Church.* The Early Church as we see it through the Epistles and the Book of Acts is highly conscious of itself as a royal priesthood. The entire congregation participated in the choosing of its pastors and servants.²⁶ The entire congregation worshiped in the fellowship of the Apostles from house to house.²⁷ The entire congregation prayed with unanimity and spontaneity in each crisis that came over it.²⁸ The entire congregation undertook the labors and responsibilities of love on behalf of one another. As rapidly as new groups became attached to the church, they followed this same pattern of organization. They also employed the same prerogatives of prayer and worship. The Holy Spirit swayed and stirred not merely the professional teachers of the church, but the members themselves,²⁹ and the preachers as they were members.

B. *The Catholic Church.* Early in the Apostolic Age a change began to emerge in the relation of pastor and people. The origins of this change were manifold. The number of professing church members increased, and with them the need for firmer organization and direction of the Church. Materialism and worldliness made it necessary to define church membership more accurately, and the Church sought for simple formulas of membership and discipline which it could enforce in order to keep its membership strong. The persecutions throughout the first three centuries caused large numbers of the original believers permanently or temporarily to repudiate their faith; and the Church sought for clear-cut and uniform means for defining who really belonged to the Church. Surrounded as it was by a society strongly governed by central authority, the Church, too, found it convenient to exalt the position of its teachers and leaders into one of direction and rule, beyond the original function of guidance and channeling of the means of grace.

1. *The Episcopacy.* This trend developed around the year 100 into a system of bishops. The word "bishop" was used not merely of the function of a pastor's overseeing the spiritual life of his people; but it was now used of the work

²⁶ Acts 1:15 ff.; 6:1 ff.

²⁷ Acts 2:42, 46.

²⁸ Acts 4:24 ff.

²⁹ Acts 10:44 ff.

of a pastor as he became overseer of lower orders of the clergy, such as deacons; or as he became overseer of other pastors as was the case in larger metropolitan areas where a number of congregations grew up side by side and where the older or abler pastor became the superior of the other pastors. By 110 A. D. the bishops were quoting the Scriptures in order to validate their authority over a congregation.

1. I then did my best as a man who was set on unity. But where there is division and anger, God does not dwell. The Lord, then, forgives all who repent if their repentance lead to the unity of God and the council of the bishop. I have faith in the grace of Jesus Christ, and He shall loose every bond from you. 2. But I beseech you to do nothing in facetiousness, but after the teaching of Christ. For I heard some men saying: "If I find it not in the charters in the Gospel, I do not believe," and when I said to them that it is in the Scriptures, they answered me: "That is exactly the question." But to me the charters are Jesus Christ, the inviolable charter is his Cross and death and resurrection, and the faith which is through Him; in these I desire to be justified by your prayers.³⁰

This authority extended over the defining of the creed which the candidates for Baptism and confirmation accepted, over the appointing and ordaining of pastors, and over cases of discipline. In effect, right in the lifetime of the oldest Apostles the Christian Church became a body governed and ruled by men who were set apart from others by rank and station, and in which they exercised human authority over people, consciences, and property.

2. *Sacerdotalism.* A further stimulus to this process was the sacerdotal principle, which early in the second century gained headway in the Church. This was the principle that the means of grace had their power, not simply because of the atonement of Christ, of which they were signs and signals, or because of the Holy Spirit, who wrought through them the effect on the heart of the hearer; but because of the character and office of the man who employed them. Thus pastors became priests. Furthermore, combined with the episcopal principle, the priesthood was a matter set apart from that of the individual believer in that it was conferred only by the laying on of hands of the bishop. This principle had a normal and natural origin, since the age was illiterate, the

³⁰ Ignatius, *Ep. to the Philad.*, VIII, 1, Ap. F., I, 247. Lake ed., Loeb. Lib., New York, 1924.

vast majority of churchgoers could not read or write, it was easy for undisciplined and ill-equipped ministers to claim a position of authority, and it was very necessary to hedge the office of the ministry about with the authority of the bishop. The result, however, was disastrous, for the Word was almost lost sight of as a power of the Spirit, and the Sacrament was turned into an agency of clerical prestige. The Sacrament itself rapidly was dominated by the doctrine of transubstantiation. For our purpose it is significant to notice that the ministry itself was set apart from the people. In the process of the Middle Ages the principle finally gained general acceptance that the Church was the body of the clergy, under the guidance of its bishops, and deferring to the chief bishop of Rome; the people were saved and made Christian only as they accepted the formulas of belief laid down by the bishops and as they submitted to the ministration of the clergy. The sacrament of penance and the doctrine of purgatory completed the bondage in which the people found themselves, but they also served to widen the breach between the clergy and the laity and effectively to make the priesthood of all believers inoperative.

C. *The Reformation.* The Lutheran Church likes to emphasize three principles as basic in the Christian religion: *Sola Gratia, Sola Fides, Sola Scriptura*. All three of these principles, however, practically express themselves in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Several facts make this doctrine basic in the Reformation of Martin Luther. These facts were discerned by Luther's contemporaries and by his Lutheran successors to a varying degree.

1. *Luther.* Luther's Reformation was a revolt in first place against a false doctrine of peace with God. The Roman system had made the peace of God a gift only in a qualified sense. At every turn this gift was circumscribed and mediated by the priesthood; the priest funneled forgiveness, supervised penance, consecrated the sacrament, and scheduled the process toward the realization of God's grace after purgatory. Luther cut this all aside by stressing the completed work of the redemption of Christ, the completed righteousness of God in Christ imputed to the sinner, and the completed peace with God, in which the believer stands in the very moment of faith. The priesthood thereby gives way to a totally different

concept, the ministry. The minister is a priest only in the degree to which the believer is a priest. The minister is engaged by his fellow believers to provide, through Word and Sacrament, that continuing hold on the grace of God which is necessary for forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. In the exact sense, there is no distinction between minister and layman; the only difference is that the minister works for the layman; the difference is not one of rank or station (*Rang* or *Stand*) but of function and work (*Amt*). Luther:

1021. Eigentlich das rechte Priesteramt ist, das Evangelium predigen, welches ist nichts anderes denn eine oeffentlich, ingemein und allenthalben zu verkundigen und zu geben, allen, die an ihn glauben. Und dies heisst das rechte Amt des neuen Testaments, solchen Befehl und Amt, von Christo gegeben, haben und fuehren, Vergebung der Suende zu verkundigen; und also solch Priesteramt eigentlich Christo selbst zusteht, und gar von ihm herquillt und fliesst. . . . er selbst der Hohepriester ist, von dem dies Predigtamt allein hergeht, auch allein von ihm predigt, dass im neuen Testament kein Priestertum soll sein noch gelten, so ausser ihm, oder anders, denn von ihm predigt.

1037. Denn ob wir wohl alle Priester sind, so koennen und sollen wir doch darum nicht alle predigen oder lehren und regieren; doch muss man aus dem ganzen Haufen etliche aussondern und waehlen, denen solches Amt befohlen werde. Und wer solches fuehrt, der ist nun nicht des Amts halben ein Priester (wie die andern alle sind), sondern ein Diener der andern aller. Und wenn er nicht mehr predigen und dienen kann oder will, so tritt er wieder in den gemeinen Haufen, befiehlt das Amt einem andern, und ist nichts anderes, denn ein jeglicher gemeiner Christ. 1038. Siehe, also muss man das Predigtamt oder Dienstamt scheiden von dem gemeinen Priesterstande aller getauften Christen. Denn solch Amt ist nicht mehr denn ein oeffentlicher Dienst, so etwan einem befohlen wird von der ganzen Gemeinde, welche alle zugleich Priester sind. . . .

So wir aber Christen worden sin durch diesen Priester und sein Priesteramt, und in der Taufe durch den Glauben ihm eingeleibt, so kriegen wir auch das Recht und Macht, das Wort, so wir von ihm haben, zu lehren und zu bekennen vor jedermann, ein jeglicher nach seinem Beruf und Stande. Denn ob wir wohl nicht alle im oeffentlichen Amt und Beruf sind, so soll und mag doch ein jeglicher Christ seinen Naechsen lehren, unterrichten, vermahnen, troesten, strafen durch Gottes Wort, wann und wo jemand das bedarf; als, Vater und Mutter ihre Kinder und Gesinde, ein Bruder, Nachbar, Buerger oder Bauer den andern.³¹

³¹ St. L. V:1021; 1037, 1038 to Ps. 110:4 from 1538 (preached). Further operations of the royal priesthood are sacrifice of our lives and goods, prayer, Luther says.

2. *The Lutheran Church.* Luther's doctrine of the royal priesthood maintained itself in the Church which took his name, in principle. In practice, the principle did not remain intact. The masses in the German states were products of centuries of formal worship. They understood the principles of the Reformation but imperfectly, and the reformers knew this. The Church of the Middle Ages had been not only a spiritual institution, but an agency for the administration of justice and morals. When the Roman hierarchy gave way, the German princes and councilors undertook the management of the Church; and the Church became an agent, not only for the Gospel, but also for areas of morals and restraint which in theory pertained to the State. The Lutheran pastor was the agent for the public administration of Word and Sacrament, and the shepherd of the believers. In practice, he was in addition an agent of the government, exerting its penalties, exercising its prestige, and standing before the community as its chief citizen, elevated above it by rank and authority as well as function. In the administration of the Church, furthermore, the Christian congregation was subordinate to government as far as choice of clergy, support of Word and Sacrament, and freedom of worship were concerned. These circumstances conspired to write into the history of German Lutheran thought a distinction between clergy and laity exalting not merely the *Pfarrer*, but also the *Prediger*.

3. *The Reformed Church.* In principle, the priesthood of all believers was recognized also by Zwingli and Calvin. The Reformed churches, furthermore, flourished to a greater degree in the cities than did their Lutheran contemporaries, and hence absorbed some of their nascent democratic spirit. In practice, however, the mode of government of the Genevan congregation was aristocratic rather than democratic. The distinction was not, indeed, between clergy and laity, although the clergy achieved great prestige also there through powers of censorship and moral supervision; but the contrast was between the people and the ruling elders. The Presbyterian form of church government was validated not merely on grounds of expediency, but from Scripture.

4. *Dissenting Groups.* Almost all of the non-Catholic groups, also outside of the Lutheran and Reformed, stressed the doctrine of the royal priesthood. The revolt against the

sacerdotal principle pervaded all Protestant movements. The dissenting groups, like the Anabaptists, actually succeeded better than the established churches in maintaining the principle also in practice. The Lutheran and the Reformed clergy, in the process of the century, usually became attached to an established agency of church government. The dissenting groups accordingly had to provide for their ministers through direct support and by a direct process of call. The result was a much greater movement of lay preaching and ministry among the dissenting groups and a much closer relation between the people and their professional pastors. Since, however, the dissenting groups were the objects of sharp doctrinal controversy and downright persecution by the government, the standard Lutheran and Reformed bodies developed an even sharper criticism and reaction against the principle of the ministry obtaining among the dissenters. Actually, this situation contributed to a decline in the doctrine of the royal priesthood. The situation parallels that in the early Church, when the bishops validated their position from Scripture — a false doctrine — in order to preserve their churches from the false doctrine of the Gnostics or Manicheans. The function in Church and State of the established ministry, furthermore, unhappily involved a popular reaction on the part of many people who did not actually understand the worth of Gospel and Sacrament at all. The Lutheran and the Reformed ministers in time had prestige, not because of the Gospel, but because of their position. The dissenting preachers suffered from want of prestige, not because of lack of the Gospel, but because of government opposition.

III. CURRENT PROBLEMS

Our Lutheran Church in America is the product of many factors. It inherits attitudes and points of view, habits of thinking and ways of action, from the European homeland and from a century of living in the New World. That means that we may expect it to incorporate some of the reaction and decay from the original principle of the priesthood of all believers in the Apostolic Church or in Luther's Reformation. However, our Church is vastly blessed by the privilege and right of reviewing itself; it is bound by only one rule, the rule of the Word of God. If it can succeed in recognizing its

shortcomings, there is no human agency which can refuse it the right to improve and to restore the original ideal. Particularly our clergy are in a crucial position. Humanly speaking, they hold the key to the thinking of the Church on the doctrine of the royal priesthood. The people do not advance beyond their pastors in thinking. This doubles the responsibility of the pastors; for if they hold back, because of habits of thought or hidden reluctance, the people are still not beyond them, and the Church suffers. The doctrine of the royal priesthood is not merely an earmark of an ideal Church, but it is the safeguard for the vitality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in people. Where people and pastors neglect this doctrine, the "Church" does not necessarily decay — it may flourish as an institution; but the Church ceases to be the Church, and people cease to draw on God in Christ for their spiritual life and energies. Hence it behooves our ministry to review not only the doctrine of the royal priesthood, but the extent to which it is actually practiced, and to summon resources for making it really work.

A. *Difficulties.* The obstacles for realizing the ideal of the royal priesthood, today as in the past, lie in the domain of the flesh. On paper the doctrine is easy to define. The faith of the Lutheran Christian also today rejoices in its truth and embraces it gladly. In the practical experience of the Church, however, the principle remains difficult to carry out. That is true because of situations which are not necessarily spiritual at all, but which lie on the surface and in the tangibles of the Church. In our own Church these difficulties are for the most part the result of numerical growth. As more and more people gather in the administration of the Church, it becomes almost inevitable that levels should emerge in administration and prestige. Strenuously the founding fathers of our country labored to write democracy into the charter of our institutions; but government by edict and bureau, and the shrugging off of individual responsibility, nevertheless have overtaken our country politically. Spiritually a similar process threatens, the moment the size of a Church complicates its activity.

1. *Administration.* Basically, the Kingdom of God is God at work in man. This Kingdom extends itself over people through the Spirit of God at work in the means of grace. As

people gather together in a group, however, and seek the conveniences of places of worship and of teaching, a series of activities enter the scene which parallel and begin to obscure the primitive sharing of the Gospel. These activities deal with plant and property—the raising of money, the building and maintaining of buildings, the training and engaging of staff, the advertising of the work of the church to the public. This activity of Christians is intensified when many simple congregations join with one another synodically in a still more complex and wholesale task of building and maintaining property, raising money, recruiting and training and engaging workers, and informing the constituency of the tasks. The primitive Gospel works like a leaven; each man hands it on to the next. The parallel tasks of administration, however, involve one person, or few persons, guiding many, counseling many, directing many. This situation was especially apparent in the beginnings of our own Church in America, where frequently full-fledged congregations emerged in the New World, adrift in a strange land, forced to rely upon clerical leadership not only for the primitive Gospel, but for material management. Under those circumstances, many varieties of relationship between pastor and people emerged. In Missouri the initial attempt was hierarchical and almost episcopal; then a reaction swept in which emphasized the royal priesthood and achieved a pure congregationalism. The Grabau movement accentuated the authority of the pastor, in spheres both of teaching and administration, and validated it on Scriptural grounds. The other congregations of German Lutherans in America fluctuated between the two extremes. The Saint Louis congregation made its anti-episcopal misgivings felt in the first constitution of the Missouri Synod. In the course of years, however, under the dominating personality of Dr. Walther, the St. Louis congregation reverted to a more typical German deference to the prestige and judgment of its pastor. Under the stress of the huge numbers of German speaking people emigrating to America and the very sudden increase in membership of the Missouri Synod, the leadership of the pastor frequently achieved exaggerated dimensions. There was not time to indoctrinate adequately or to review the spiritual attitudes and insight of people prior to their communing at Missouri Synod altars. The pastor on his part,

therefore, felt obligated to assert redoubled authority over doctrine and morals; and the people were trained through the generations from 1860 to 1900 to defer to the doctrine and to the administrative judgments of their pastors. They were not trained to review the doctrine like the Bereans; they were not habituated to share in the administration of their churches. The result was heightened by the meager supply — and sometimes the meager training — of the pastors themselves. The result was frequently that the doctrine of the royal priesthood was preached and praised, but not realized. The pastor became a channel or sound system through which God reached the people, rather than a workman who coupled the people directly to God. This is not said in complaint or in criticism of the many congregations and pastors to whom it applies, but simply to indicate the difficulties through which also our own Church has had to come in realizing this doctrine. Furthermore, the trend toward a stronger central authority in Synod, which was to be expected with increase in size, has set in. The motives for this trend are not wrong, and the form which it takes is not wrong. But the effort is under way to obligate members of Synod to the resolutions of Synod on the basis of membership in Synod; the alternative is to leave Synod. The 1947 convention sought improvement by this formula:

1.09 RELATION OF SYNOD TO ITS MEMBERS

Substitute for 1.09 b: b. Synod expects every member congregation to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear expedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of the congregation to be the judge of the expediency of the resolution as applied to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily, but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity.³²

In the course of years the contrasts between clergy and laity have been intensified also by the development of the profession of the American clergy. American church work, particularly with the shift to the city, emphasized administration not only on the supervisory or episcopal level, but also on the parochial level. Congregations thought of themselves

³² *Proceedings of 40th Regular Convention., C. P. H., 1947, p. 425, 1.09.*

as hiring pastors, not merely for the public preaching and teaching of the Word and the administration of the Office of the Keys, but for a variety of tasks and activities of financial, secretarial, and promotional character. Church work for the layman in the course of time became simply the contributing and gathering of funds for the hiring of professional workers. It may be an oversimplification, but one not too far beyond actual truth, to say that a distinction emerged in our Church between clergy and laity in that church work was that which clergymen did and which laymen paid for. It is significant to note that organized lay movements in our Church frequently concerned themselves chiefly with fund raising. It is also interesting to note that much of the unprinted controversy between pastors and teachers as to the nature of their office concerned a rank in which supposedly both stood above the layman. Thus the processes at work in the very history of the Missouri Synod and within its group tended to emphasize contrast between clergy and laity and to obscure the priesthood of the believer.

2. *The Power Age.* Our Church is influenced not only by factors from within, but also from outside. The past hundred years will be noteworthy in history as a time in Western civilization accentuating tangible power at the expense of intangible ideas. Previous instances of such a development have been the Roman Empire, and the Italian city-state. The current movement has been fostered by the industrial revolution and the capitalistic culture which has paralleled it. Particularly America has been a prey of this movement. During most of its history it has been the victim of ruthless exploitation of natural resources and the accent on capital wealth. In its current phase America suffers under the fear that natural resources will run out and seeks to stem the tide by a power economy and politics. The Church has not been immune to this climate of thought. It is significant that the Roman Catholic Church has made its most signal advance in America, not only in its own denomination, but in the prestige which it enjoys in the eyes of Protestantism. The Catholic Church has expressed itself with authority and unity on every problem of current life. Disjointed Protestantism views this show of authority with admiration and seeks for the means of equaling it. The ecumenical movement is in part fostered

by the desire to present a united front of Protestantism which will outthrust the vigor of the Roman Catholic Church in national and international economy and politics. Curiously, however, this phase of the ecumenical movement does not aim so much at a unity of the people; if it did, the royal priesthood might come into its own. But it aims at a unity of authority; it seeks to make the heads of the Church speak with the weight of the entire Church behind them. In that sense it capitulates to the power complex of our time, which economically and politically fosters dictatorships.

The shift from the intangible ideas to tangible force always accompanies institutions which are in a state of decay. This decay is not necessarily marked by poverty or smallness, but normally by the opposite, wealth and numbers. Our Church, too, in common with the institutions of American life, faces the threat of decay. The march of generations has sent those people to heaven for whom the life of God in Christ Jesus was the absorbing value, and has nurtured generations for which the institutions, the heritage of plant and administration, is the significant thing. Under such circumstances the administration becomes more significant than the life of God. As men face the needs of the time in moral judgments and in the recruiting of resources for the goals of the Church, the primary significance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ becomes a thing to say and to advertise; but the motive for the work becomes the thrust and force of administrative pressure. The royal priesthood flourishes only in people who are directly in touch with God. The moment that their religious life has significance simply because of what people say or urge, a difference emerges between the people themselves and those who administrate or urge them.

Politically and socially our time seems to be setting itself for some vast conflict. The revolution in which it has been engaged for many years, namely, the turning of the tide of physical property from the privileged classes to the masses, seems about to climax in a death struggle involving nations, civilizations, and religions. The Christian Church, facing this battle, tends to imagine that it can save itself only as it adopts organization and takes sides in philosophy. Pessimistic thinkers ask whether, as has been the case in the sixth or in the sixteenth century, the outward forms of the Christian

Church have perhaps not served their usefulness for a cycle of the world's history and are to be replaced by new and primitive forms of Christian society. The priesthood of all believers remains the touchstone of this process and the key to this question. If the Christian Church is going to forsake that principle in order to maintain itself in the struggle of our times, we may expect God to rule that the sacrifice has been too great and that the battle was thus surrendered before it was joined. If our Church, and particularly our clergy, are to do their part in maintaining the will of God for His people, they may well seek to resist the forces of decay and refresh the powers of the life of God in the individual members of their Church. That means a revival of the royal priesthood of every believer.

B. Some Solutions. During the past hundred years our Synod has not presented a uniformly unpleasant picture concerning the priesthood of the believer. Particularly in the individual parish, out on the battle line, and particularly in the parish aware of its coming to grips with unchristian society, a salutary attitude toward the royal priesthood has prevailed. It is often said that the smaller and younger churches have distinguished themselves in this respect. This is probably not true; the contrast is not between smaller and larger, or between younger and older, but between those on the one hand in which the Word of God has empowered a living and working faith, and others in which church work became simply the support of the congregation. The entire program of improvement was imperiled for a time in the shift from the European to the American language. In the period of change, religion became a matter of thought and speech foreign to that of the community, and the pastor frequently spoke in a language divorced from the main current of thought and life. As the Church comes to equilibrium in the process of change, it conquers some of these difficulties. Any suggestions which we offer for remedying current problems and vitalizing the royal priesthood are, therefore, by way of observation of existing practice as well as reaction to our own shortcomings.

1. *The Functional Ministry.* As pastors view the problem of the royal priesthood, they obviously can make contributions only in two areas. The one is that they keep themselves from developing a cleavage between clergy and laity; the other,

that they enable their people to take over the responsibilities and privileges of the royal priesthood more abundantly.

Pastors will do much in the right direction if they succeed in re-establishing Luther's ideal of community between pastors and people in station, and distinction only in office or function. That process is under way. Probably every pastor, from time to time, makes adjustments in his own thinking and in his work toward that end. The work of the minister is to maintain the individual with God through Christ. For that purpose he has one tool, the fact of Christ's atonement. His purpose for the individual, however, is as varied as the individual's life is varied; and the techniques with which the pastor carries out his purpose are as varied as the avenues by which the pastor can reach the individual's mind and heart. The pastor thus must continually revive in his mind the attitude of being a helper of the individual for maintaining his hold on God. The pastor stands by with every means of insight, courtesy, and kindness in helping the individual to overcome the handicaps of the flesh and the world and the devil for his spiritual life. The pastor to that end sets up every contact between the individual and himself, and every tie of affection and good will, which he possibly can. The common people heard Jesus gladly because He spoke as one having authority.³³ That authority did not lie merely in the show of right or the asseveration of truth; the scribes and Pharisees had that abundantly. But His authority was rather the power by which He freed His hearers from every handicap for listening to Him and from the ills which beset them; "authority" actually means as much as freedom. The activities of the pastor, therefore, become a vast series of minute and varied operations in which he is constantly at work keeping people with God, enlarging the life of Christ in their hearts.³⁴

The pastor will do well to recognize what prevents him

³³ Matt. 7:28-29.

³⁴ Luther, XII: 483, *Hauspostille*, on Joh. 19:25-37: "Wo es nun in der Kirche recht zugeht, sollen die, so das Predigtamt fuehren, ein Mutterherz gegen die Kirche haben. Denn wo solches Herz nicht da ist, wird man faul und verdrossen, und sonderlich wird man zum Leiden unwillig; wie der Herr sehr fein anzeigt, Joh. 21. . . . Wo nun das Mutterherz, die grosse Liebe, nicht da ist und die Prediger treibt, da wird der Schaeflein uebel gewartet."

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from carrying out this function. It will seldom be the case that the pastor consciously seeks to exalt his station into one of authority and thus disrupts his place in the priesthood of all believers or builds an artificial distinction between clergy and laity. When that happens, it is usually due to a difficulty of an emergency nature. A pastor may find himself unable to meet the needs of people in certain unexpected or unaccustomed areas of their lives; this may happen in youth work, in a shifting population, or in a controversy occasioning clash of judgment. Uncertain of his ground, the pastor may seek to enhance his position by a show of authority or demand for recognition. If he does not succeed, he has wrecked the ties of usefulness with his people. If he does succeed, he may retain a usefulness, but he has also destroyed the common level with his people, and violated in their minds the attitude which they should have about themselves. Such cases, however, are, if unpleasant and unhappy, at least rare and abnormal.³⁵

More trying and more common, however, is the situation in which the pastor assumes a difference in rank because of the tasks to which he is assigned. As he becomes the executive secretary of the church's business, the accent develops on an executive authority rather than on the function of maintaining the life in Christ. Here it becomes especially important that the pastor reserve time in the total complex of his activities for the essential work with the individual. We have frequently said in our literature that the pastor should continue to have time for personal study and preparation of his sermons. We should say with increasing emphasis that the pastor should have time for work with the individual. In larger communities and congregations his time for personal consultations must continue to be inviolate. The people must know that there are hours when they can find their pastor, and that he will have the leisure to listen to their need, and the interest in that need. The pastor's activity in his or-

³⁵ Luther, XII: 410. *Epistelpostille* to 2 Cor. 11:19 to 12:9; eds. begin 1525: "Die Summa dieser Epistel, dass an einem Prediger oder Lehrer kein schaedlicher noch giftiger Laster ist denn eitele Ehre. . . . 411 Alle anderen Laster sind traeglicher in einem Prediger, wiewohl keines gut ist. . . . Denn das Predigtamt ist geordnet, dass es allein Gottes Ehre suche und meine mit ganzem Herzen."

ganizations must be one which reinforces in the people's thinking the fact that he is the specialist in their individual needs and problems, and must remind them to bring those needs to the pastor for those solutions which involve the life of the Spirit. The Apostles who were the pastors of the first church in Jerusalem set the proper pace when they asked for help in executive areas of the church's business, and demanded priority for the tasks involving the teaching of the Word of God and the conducting of the prayers of the people. Even where the pastor operates with group teaching, as in preaching, Bible classes, membership classes, he will do well to maintain in his own mind the desire to reach the individual. Only as his preaching is in effect the sitting down with each individual in the audience will it be persuasive. Only as his teaching is in effect the meeting of the individual's questions, the stimulating of the individual's interests, and the leading of the individual into the greater life in Christ, can it be called teaching. As the pastor achieves these objectives, however, he is implementing and reinforcing the universal priesthood. Thus he carries out a ministry which does not establish a difference in rank, but which carries out the fullness of function of the servant and pastor. His work thus becomes more arduous, but it achieves its true place in the Church.³⁶

2. The *Functional Church*. In our age our people will always be ready to relax the universal priesthood. Our power age emphasizes organization, leadership, dictation. Our materialistic age emphasizes the purchasing of services rendered by others. Our people will always be ready therefore to shrink their spiritual life into a simple series of processes in which they buy exemption from penalties for sins and engage religious professionals to take their place as workers for

³⁶ Luther, XIII: 1204. *Hauspostille*, Mark 10:35-45: "Das heisst dem Predigtamt nicht allein die weltliche Macht und Gewalt genommen, sondern auch das aufgelegt, dass es durchaus nur ein Dienstamt sein soll, da man nichts von hat denn Muehe und Arbeit, und danach allen Undank, ja wohl auch alles Unglueck. . . . Die Apostel haben mehr Befehls denn die Bischoefe; die Bischoefe und Pfarrherren mehr denn andere gemeine Lehrer und Prediger oder ihre Diener und Diakonen. Solche unterschiedene Aemter will unser lieber Herr Christus alle gleich machen mit diesem Befehl, dass niemand derselben zu seiner eigenen Ehre oder Nutzen brauchen, sondern allein damit andern Leuten dienen und Muehe und Arbeit davon haben soll."

God. Clergymen, discerning the signs of the time, need to throw themselves against this tendency with everything at their disposal. They can make the beginning with their manner, their demeanor. They can make clear by their humbleness, but also by their own industriousness, that the Christian religion is a matter of faith in the individual and that they are bent on working for the other person to maintain that faith in him. As voting members of their congregations they can pool their judgments for what they are worth with the others, humbly and kindly defer to the will of the majority, and never insist on their way because they are the preacher. Where God's Word had directive for action, they will share its insights and exalt its meaning. Never, however, will they seek to make their way the right one by cloaking it in the garb of a Scriptural vocabulary or of pastoral prestige. This means some very hard thinking on the pastor's part. In the heat of give and take, in the rub of many minds, it is not always easy for them to understand and to recognize where good thinking ends and prejudice or the desire to have one's way begins. Above all they shall have to work hard on this easy rationalization: "I must maintain the dignity of the ministerial office." They maintain that dignity, not by getting their way without exception in voters' meetings, but simply and always by putting the Spirit of God into human hearts through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To fail in this clear thinking not only draws a trail of heartache over the minutes of many a voters' meeting, but it robs people of the great contribution of Lutheranism to their practical life and the polity of their Church, namely, the fact of the royal priesthood. It leads them to assume that the pastor's significance is that of dictating policy. When they assume that, then the pastor loses his value in their minds as nurturer of spiritual life; they cease to take in his supply of the Spirit of God through the means of grace. Certainly this does not imply that the pastor should withdraw from the management of the church's business or should never take a position in matters of judgment. His example, his readiness to undertake such judgments, his swiftness to yield to the will of the majority where it is a matter of judgment only, will be a shining demonstration to his people of how Christians live in unity together. But at the same time it will be an invitation to draw richly

from the source of supply for practical living which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Sacrament of His blood, of which the pastor is steward.³⁷

In his program of preaching and teaching the pastor can do much to implement and exalt the royal priesthood. He can make the doctrine clear. This he must do through the standard devices at his disposal. He must unravel the figurative language of the concept and present it to his people in as literal truth as possible: that every believer because of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ is utterly at peace with God and draws directly upon the life and Spirit of God; that every believer can grow in this life through his own direct hold of faith on the atonement of Jesus Christ, reinforced by Word and Sacrament.

As the pastor says this in words, however, he must add the factor of teaching which is the "teaching to observe." He must make clear that the royal priesthood is not only a piece of information to carry in the mind, it is a program of living which involves the life and experience of the believer. He must help the believer to recognize that the believer's life of prayer, the solution of his personal problems, his reach out to the brother in family and congregation and community, all stem from this personal relation to God through Christ which makes him a royal priest. He must seek to guide the members of the church, young and old, through a series of activities and experiences in which they put this relation to God into practical use. The pastor must be available to his people in assisting them step by step in this process, consulting with them on lags or gains, and working with them as a helper in achieving results.

³⁷ Luther, XIII:2402, 17 pt. *Hauspostille*, from 1533 on sitting in the upper room: "Darum obenan sitzen, Ehre oder Gewalt haben, Doktor oder Fuerst sein, ist nicht boese; aber sich selbst eindringen ist boese, wenn man nicht Gott und das Werk, sondern seine eigene Ehre und Nutz darin sucht, dass es allein meinem schaendlichen Herzen dienen soll. Ein Prediger soll nicht allein Ehre haben, sondern auch arbeiten und die Ehre verdienen; wie Petrus, Paulus und andere getan haben, sonst ist kein Glueck bei der Ehre."

Is Doctrinal Unity a Luxury?

By TH. ENGELDER

(Conclusion)

By the grace of God we have been won for the proposition that the adherence to all doctrine revealed is not a luxury, but a necessity. And by the grace of God we repel, in the first place, all the arguments to the contrary. The argument is advanced that we Lutherans distinguish between fundamental and non-fundamental articles and thus *eo ipso* declare the non-fundamental articles to be unnecessary. Nothing could be further from the truth. To be sure, there is a great distinction between the fundamental articles and the non-fundamental ones. We say that the fundamental articles are necessary for salvation, while faith may subsist with the denial of the non-fundamental articles. But when the question is whether one is at liberty to reject the non-fundamental articles, the only Scriptural answer is that even the most trivial article must be accepted. The importance of the various articles varies, but that certainly gives no man the right to say that the least important ones are not important. Every single article that is revealed in Scripture is very important — for the preservation of the old faith and for providing a strong, robust, energetic Christianity. "Nothing taught in the Bible may be treated as an 'open question'; Christians should insist upon the unity of the Spirit; persistent denial of any doctrine stands in the way of church fellowship; it is unionism to legitimize, for instance, the preaching of Chiliasm side by side with that of Antichiliasm." (*Concordia Cyclopaedia*, p. 510.) "None of the fathers, least of all Dr. Walther, ever declared non-fundamental doctrines non-essential" (*Towards Lutheran Union*, p. 57).

Why, even though a man may be saved despite the fact that he denies, by reason of his ignorance or his inability to see its connection with the chief fundamental doctrines, an *articulus fundamentalis secundarius* (which the unionists therefore call a non-fundamental, secondary point), does this prove that that article is not important? God forgives the Christians in the Reformed Church their error regarding the Lord's Supper; is it therefore an unimportant teaching? Does God

license that teaching? Dr. Pieper states in *Distinctive Doctrines*, p. 127: "It is not according to the *good pleasure* of God—as modern theologians teach—that sects exist, for all Christians are required to agree on all doctrines of faith revealed in Holy Scripture (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3-6), but sects arose and exist by God's *forbearance* only, like other sins. Sects arise and continue not for the purpose that Christians should join them, but for the purpose that Christians should prove their allegiance to God by avoiding them, 1 Cor. 11:19." Would God reveal doctrines and at the same time declare them to be unimportant?

We shall keep on saying with Luther: "One little point of doctrine is of more value than heaven and earth; and therefore we cannot permit the least jot thereof to be corrupted" (IX:650). "We are bound to keep all the articles of the Christian doctrine, great ones and small ones (we do not, in fact, *consider any of them small*), *pure and certain*" (IX:649).

The unionists argue, furthermore, *that the times have changed*; under present conditions the demand for doctrinal agreement is out of place. Bishop McConnell told the Church Federation in St. Louis: "The voices of our time call for Christian unity. This does not mean uniformity. . . . Our world does not tolerate old differences. . . . Our differences remind me of the great beasts one used to see pictured in our physical geographies as the inhabitants of the earth during the prehistoric periods. I used to ask myself who killed these strange, forgotten monsters. The answer was 'nobody.' 'The climate changed, and they just died off.' The climate of life. Our differences are going to die off." (*The Church at Work*, Dec. 5, 1929.) The *Christian Century* of Feb. 10, 1937: "The motto of the Disciples of Christ, 'Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where they are silent, we are silent,' cannot be recognized as binding. . . . Has the accumulated experience of the centuries no authority? Has Christian tradition no weight? Did God cease to speak to men when the New Testament canon was closed? . . . 'In the New Testament,' says Prof. Wilhelm Hermann, 'there is no unalterable doctrine which embraces the whole scheme of Christian thought. It is no imperfection, it is rather an excellence, that the epistles of the New Testament are messages for definite circumstances

and not contributions to a doctrinal system which shall be valid to all eternity.' This, if it is true, is important, and the Lutherans should be paged and told about it." That will suit those who live in the climate of utter indifference to the Bible. But we Lutherans need not be told about it. We are immune against that argument. The conditions in the world have not changed. The same need is here. What was true one hundred years ago, four hundred years ago ("filial submission to every word of God's revelation was the life stream in Luther's theology," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1947, p. 811), nineteen hundred years ago ("teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"), is true today. Not one single doctrine may be set aside as a luxury; the Church needs them all.

Nor shall we fall for the "*irreducible minimum*," the "*least common denominator*" propaganda of the unionists. Dr. S. P. Cadman would be glad to see a holiday given to all theological speculation for fifty years. "I plead for union upon an irreducible minimum of faith and propose certain neutral zones for difference of opinion in theological thought. . . . There is a waste of the resources of God to satisfy sectarian vanity." (See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1934.) The irreducible minimum would be some such phrase as "belief in the Lord Jesus our Savior." In asking for this irreducible minimum Cadman and his unionistic brethren are setting the demands of their human philosophy in place of the demands of Scripture. A Bible theologian will not hear of such a demand. He declares "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). He considers it a sacrilege to "reduce" the Christian doctrine in any way. "Have God's representatives on earth the option to offer a discount on the terms set by God, in order to meet a given situation?" (Schmauk and Benze, in *The Confessional Principle*, p. XVIII.) Luther: "The doctrine is not ours but God's" (IX:644). Cadman and his unionistic brethren ask the Church to discard a great number of the Christian doctrines as "luxuries," unneeded by the Church; but, as Professor B. B. Warfield pointed out, the "reduction of Christianity to its lowest common denominator means nothing less than the shearing of Christianity of all its strength" (see *Lehre u. Wehre*, 1917, p. 282). Every single doctrine belongs to the health-giving food which the Lord has provided for

His Church. The diet prescribed by Cadman and his unionistic brethren is a starvation diet. Discussing the "irreducible minimum" of the human body, a physician told of men who had both arms and legs amputated and still lived. Others lived after removal of the gall bladder, after the nose and eyes were gone, after parts of the brain were cut away. Try this, said the doctor, on *one* individual, but before the irreducible minimum is reached, the patient will be dead. And, says the *Presbyterian*, "according to our liberal brethren men seem to be able to live without the inerrancy of Scripture; therefore lop it off. . . . And the Blood Atonement — many modern folk subsist comfortably enough without that outworn, childish dogma; therefore lop it off. Of course, long before the 'irreducible minimum' is reached, the patient will be dead." (See the *Lutheran Church Herald*, Nov. 29, 1927.) F. Bente said, and all Bible theologians agree with him: "In our negotiations looking to church unity we must keep in mind the objectives which the Word of God has set down. Scripture asks us to aim at one thing: agreement in all articles of doctrine, nothing more, but also nothing less. In seeking church unity our minimal demand, as well as our maximal demand, is that all subject themselves to God's clear Word in every point." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1897, p. 208.)

In working towards the union, the unity, of the churches, we must realize, in the second place, that God's Word effects the unity. "The Word," says Luther, "must establish Christian unity and communion" (IX:831). "The Holy Ghost produces harmony in the house . . . by teaching the Christians to believe the same thing" (XIX:345). Christian unity is not a luxury provided only for a select group, but God has placed it in the reach of all. All that is necessary is for all to yield willing assent to Scripture. And all doctrines of Christianity are set down in Scripture in the clearest language. Unionism denies not only that agreement in doctrine is required by God, but also that it is *possible* to achieve such agreement. "Is perfect agreement concerning doctrine possible?" asks Dr. Pieper, and he answers "most emphatically that it is. The Scriptures are perfectly clear on all articles of faith, every article of faith being revealed at least somewhere in Scripture in plain and proper words. God, by graciously giving His Word to men, did not propose to them

a collection of riddles, but made His Word to be 'a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path' (Ps. 119:105), 'a light that shineth in a dark place' (2 Pet. 1:19), 'making wise the simple' (Ps. 19:7). Erring concerning any article of faith is impossible as long as the words of Scripture are retained as they read. Ere falling into error is possible, the plain words of Scripture must have been entirely set aside or twisted from their natural meaning according to human reason or feeling." (*Distinctive Doctrines*, p. 138.) Again: "It seems incredible that the possibility of reaching an agreement on all articles of the Christian faith should be quite generally denied today within Christendom. It is not a matter of agreeing on dark sayings of men and abstruse philosophical problems, but of agreeing on what God meant when He clearly revealed the doctrine in Holy Scripture. The Christian doctrine is revealed in Scripture in such a manner that it does not require great human skill and art, but only the simple faith in God's Word to know the truth. Scripture does not merely hint at the doctrines, does not contain them in a rudimentary form, waiting for the theologian to develop them. God certainly did not in writing Holy Scripture say only the *A*, leaving it to the wisdom of men to find the *B* and the *C* and the rest of the alphabet of the doctrine by their own endeavors. No, all articles of the Christian doctrine are fully and completely revealed in God's Word. All that men need to do in order to possess the truth is to simply repeat in faith what God has already said. And Holy Scripture is clear to all Christians, the unlearned as well as the learned. . . . Ps. 19:7; 2 Pet. 1:19; 2 Tim. 3:15." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1888, p. 291.)

There is disagreement in doctrine within external Christendom. But to what do these various sects owe their origin? We are being told that God is responsible for this; He has endowed people with various temperaments, so that, following their natural inclinations, there is a Lutheran *type* of doctrine, a Reformed *type*, a Roman Catholic *type* — each type pleasing to God. No, a sect arises when men refuse to accept the simple teaching of Scripture. Pieper: "The Reformed Church cannot be called a sister church of the Lutheran Church. That a Reformed Church exists side by side with the Lutheran Church is not the result of 'a necessary historical

development,' as men say nowadays, but is due to the fact that the Reformed Church has, in those doctrines in which she differs from the Lutheran Church, made human reason the principle of theology alongside of God's Word." (*Vor- traege ueber "die Ev.-Lutherische Kirche,"* p. 29.) R. Lenski: "Everyone and all of us together can truly find only this one truth and true sense in the Scriptures, and will thus be one in faith. And the Scriptures are clear, perfectly adequate to present this one truth to every man. They who deviate from that one truth, no matter how, can do so only by making the Word mean what it never meant, and *they*, they alone, are to blame for such deviation." (On Acts 17:11.) Luther: "All heresies and errors in the Scriptures have not arisen from the simplicity of the words as is the general report throughout the world, but from men not attending to the simplicity of the words" (*Dass der freie Wille nichts sei*, XVIII:1820).

"It is neither necessary *nor possible* to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines"—there is no justification for such a statement.* "God has given Holy Scripture such a form that the knowledge of the truth is not only possible, but that straying from the truth is impossible as long as we continue

* It may be apropos to cite a few sentences of Huelsemann, quoted by Walther in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, page 144: "In dogmas which do not injure the means for attaining salvation, all and every believer may err. . . . Toleration in non-fundamental errors and in matters of ignorance pertains to the union of brotherly love among those who without division are associated in a visible church." Walther's comment is: "Huelsemann teaches nothing else but what we with all orthodox teachers assert, that an error is only then church divisive if it either destroys the dogmatic foundation or at least attacks the organic foundation, as when one stubbornly and consciously contradicts the clear Word of God even after convinced by argument." Hoenecke has this in his *Dogmatik*: "That the Church has never reached a perfect, but only a fundamental unity of doctrine and confession, is a fact which is true, but at the same time one which should deeply grieve the Christians and cause them to be ashamed, for this defect has its reason nowhere else but in the flesh of the Christians. Yet the fact of the defect cannot involve its right to exist, and from the deplorable fact that the Church has ever reached only a fundamental unity of faith we are not to draw the conclusion and principle that she is not to go beyond this condition. We shall indeed bear with those who err from weakness; but their error is not to demand recognition as a justified point of view, as an open question, but it is to be regarded only as a position which offends against Scripture and which will annul church fellowship, not indeed at once, but certainly at such a time when the error, after a thorough refutation from Scripture and after its inability to submit any points for its justification has become manifest, still insists upon maintaining itself." (*Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, I:457.)

in the words of Scripture, as Christ so clearly testifies when He guarantees to us in John 8 the knowledge of the truth if we continue in His Word." (Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 180.)

But can all men think alike? The unionists like to harp on the theme that it "was not the divine purpose that those who love the Lord Jesus should think alike on all points of doctrine" (John De Witt). They do not think alike in philosophy; why should they be made to think alike in theology? "There is no possibility of educated and conscientious men agreeing in any one philosophy or theology" (C. Macfarland). Now, there are certain spheres of knowledge where all men do think alike. Dr. James Endicott of Canada said at a Lenten noonday service in St. Louis: "The Savior was talking of the way of life, which is as definite as mathematics. . . . The mathematical man keeps saying to us, 'twice two is four.' He will not budge from that by a hair's breadth, yet by that narrow rule he measures the stars. Christianity is a way of truth and will have no sort of compromise with lies of any sort." (*Globe-Democrat*, March 24, 1932.) And while it is true that there is no possibility of men agreeing in any one philosophy, it is not true that this applies equally to theology. In philosophy there is no infallible teacher. But the Christian theologian follows the infallible teaching of Scripture. And if all Christian theologians did follow Scripture, there would be unanimity of teaching within the Christian Church. As Pieper said in his *Vortraege* (II, p. 65): "If men would permit Scripture to explain itself, there would be no dissensus but a perfect consensus." There is a consensus of doctrine in the confessional Lutheran Church. If men took their thoughts from Scripture, all Christians would think alike on all points of doctrine.

And "the Word establishes Christian unity and communion" by teaching as the chief and central article of the Christian religion the justification of the sinner by grace through faith. Concord between the Lutheran and the Catholic Churches cannot be established by making the disagreement on the *articulus fundamentalissimus* a minor matter, but by showing that the doctrine of justification by works takes the heart out of Christianity. "Upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the

Pope." (*Smalcald Art., Trigl.*, p. 463.) When a Catholic priest or a Catholic layman is won over to confess justification by faith alone, the work of the reunion of Christendom is being accomplished. And we need to stress this article of justification by faith alone also in our negotiations with the Reformed churches. For "while most Protestant churches subscribe with the Lutheran Church to the truth that justification is by grace alone, by faith, without the deeds of the Law, they subvert this doctrine through their teaching concerning the *means* by which a man is justified. They teach falsely concerning the means by which God justifies, the Word and the Sacraments, and concerning the means by which man appropriates it, faith; and these errors are buttressed by false teaching concerning the work and person of Christ and concerning His gracious will and call of God." (Walther, *Referat von der Rechtfertigung*, p. 35.) And C. P. Krauth said: "Our Church is needed not only for her motherhood to her own children but for the great wants of Christendom and of the world. She is needed as a witness to that doctrine which is conceded in terms by the whole Protestant world, but which is invaded primarily or by necessary inference by every system which is at war with ours — the doctrine of justification by faith." The *Lutheran Diet*, 1877, p. 48.) A godly union with the Reformed churches can be effected only through a thorough discussion of the article of justification and its subsidiary articles. Walther: "Our polemics against doctrinal errors will only then be of practical importance when we show that these errors directly affect the doctrine of justification."

Moreover, "amisso articulo justificationis, amissa est simul tota doctrina Christiana" (Luther, on Galatians, IX: 24). The doctrine of justification affects every other doctrine. Pieper: "To be sure, a Christian may for a time err in those articles which lie on the *periphery*. But a Christian who from weakness errs on certain points at once renounces his errors when God's Word is made to *comfort* him." (*Vortraege*, I, p. 32.) In other words, he will drop his error if he is shown that it militates against the comforting doctrine of justification by grace alone. Is the Christian enmeshed by the error of Sabbatarianism? Show him that it subverts the Christian liberty, the result of justification by faith. Can he not see the Pope is the Antichrist? Speaking of the false claim of the Papacy

to have supreme authority over the faith of men and the false claim to the power to forgive sin, Hodge says: "Those claims have no parallel in the history of the world. If such pretensions as these do not constitute the power which makes them Antichrist, then nothing more remains. Any future Antichrist that may arise must be a small affair compared to the papacy." (*Systematic Theology*, III, p. 816.) So "if this only article remain pure on the battlefield, the Christian Church also remains pure, and in godly harmony and without any sects; but if it does not remain pure, it is not possible that any sect or fanatical spirit can be resisted" (Luther, V:1170, *Trigl.* 917:6). This article safeguards against all errors, and its acceptance will, sooner or later, it may be only in heaven, remove all deviations. In our negotiations towards Church fellowship we must begin and end with this article: "We must preach all doctrines in such a manner that at bottom we preach only justification" (Pieper, *Vortraege*, I, p. 95).

This leads to our third point: In what spirit should we work toward agreement in doctrine? First, we rely solely on the Word of God to effect the church union, the unity of doctrine. Carnal wisdom cannot show us the way. Political force cannot effect the unity. The union effected for reasons of temporal advantages is a patchwork which does not hold. "The world at the present time is sagaciously discussing how to quell the controversy and strife over doctrine and faith and to effect a compromise. . . . Let the learned, the wise, it is said, bishops, emperors, and princes, arbitrate. Each side can easily yield something. . . . Here is lack of understanding, for understanding proves by the Word that such patchwork is not according to God's will, but that doctrine, faith, and worship must be preserved pure and unadulterated; there must be no mingling with human nonsense, human opinions or wisdom. God will still support us if we deal uprightly and faithfully in these requirements, if we further and honor the Word of God and be not unthankful nor seek things that counterfeit God's Word." (Luther, XII:973.) Only that union counts which is effected by the Word of God. And we thank the Lord for whatever measure of success He in His grace and wisdom grants to our unwavering insistence on God's Word.

Next, the labor towards reuniting Christendom is carried

on in a spirit of true humility, with a heartfelt sense of the unmerited grace of God bestowed on us. Our possession of the true doctrine does not fill us with a sense of superiority over others. We know that we are by nature no more immune against doctrinal errors than they are. Nor do we demand their acceptance of our position in a dogmatical spirit. All we ask of them is to submit to the Word of God and praise with us the grace of God that opens His Word to unworthy sinners.

Dr. Pieper: "How the doctrine of God's grace creates and preserves unity is thus described by Luther (VI:36): 'The prophet here (Is. 2:4) uses a fine figure to describe the peace which cannot exist in the heart nor outwardly among men unless the heart is certain of forgiveness. And no better means can be found to remove the disunity than that which Christ uses, when with one word He puts them all on the same level, finding all of them alike guilty of sin and all under the same condemnation. . . . That creates a fellow feeling among the Christians and draws them together when they realize that all are being saved through the very same grace and know that all are equal in their lack of merit and that all are under equal guilt.' " (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1918, p. 182.)

Next, the work of *uniting the Christians who are in disagreement with one another requires the spirit of patience*. "We must not be quick to discontinue this work, even if it takes longer than we had expected. We keep it up with great patience as long as there is, in our Christian judgment, any prospect and hope of overcoming the error." (Pieper, in *Proc., Oregon and Washington District*, 1924, p. 27.) Luther went so far as to say that they, the Reformed, "have been ensnared, with a good conscience, by a different understanding" (concerning the Lord's Supper), "and so we will gladly bear with them. If they are honest, Christ the Lord may deliver them. On the other hand, I, too, am acting with a good conscience; the other understanding has taken me captive — unless I do not understand my own position. Therefore they should bear with me, if they cannot share my position." (XVII:2051.) Of course, patience is no longer a Christian virtue when we meet with obstinate, persistent rejection of God's clear Word and the demand is made to give contradictory views equal standing. Lic. Martin Kiunke has ex-

pressed the right idea: "There is a tremendous difference between the casual intrusion of error under strong protest and the *a priori* admission of error with the implicit rejection of doctrinal discipline" (CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, 1947, p. 903). That was Walther's principle: "The time for breaking off fraternal relations with those also who err in non-fundamental doctrines arrives then only when they stubbornly refuse to accept the convincing testimony of Scripture" (*Lehre u. Wehre*, XIV, p.109).

Finally, God has laid a grave responsibility upon us. The great heritage which the Lutheran Church enjoys carries with it a great responsibility. The duty to make our fellow Christians sharers of the pure doctrine will not permit us to treat the agreement in doctrine as a luxury which can for the moment be laid aside; it leaves us no alternative but to insist on the acceptance of the whole truth. It is a matter of conscience. The truth of God's Word has taken hold of us, and we cannot sit quietly by while our neighbors are lacking a part of it. "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9). Why, even the non-Christian knows that those who possess the truth have the sacred duty to share it with others. Mahatma Gandhi told E. Stanley Jones: "You must practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down." And Dr. Hu Shih, the agnostic, said to a group of missionaries: "I do not believe what you believe, but if I believed half of what you say you believe, I would be more earnest than you are" (see *Lutheran Standard*, Oct. 28, 1933). Remember the urgent admonition that came to us from a leader of the Lutheran Church: "We know that we are responsible to all seeking and inquiring men that we do not withhold from them anything which the Lord would tell them and give them." (See the preceding article.) Every member of the Holy Christian Church is aflame with the desire that "an end be put to all schisms" (The Litany) and that perfect agreement in the doctrine be established. To that the Church must devote all her energies. The *Lutheraner* spoke in the name of Christendom when it said: "In other words: The chief concern of the Christians is that all members believe and confess the one pure doctrine of the Word of God. St. Paul inculcated this duty in 1 Cor. 1:10: 'I be-

seech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you.' This one great thing, that we 'be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,' is the important business of the Christians in the face of the many sects which have disrupted Christendom, and this includes that we should both study and confess the Word of God with great earnestness and see to it that others be brought to the same faithful adherence to God's Word." (1947, p. 357.)

We are reminded in *Government in the Missouri Synod* how solicitous the fathers were about preserving the unity of the doctrine. It tells, pages 164—190, how "Walther describes their oneness in faith and confession and the efforts they were making to maintain their concord." "Their chief objective was to strengthen one another in Lutheran faith and polity . . . 'to comfort, advise, admonish, and exhort one another.'" "Every attempt was made to keep discordant elements out of Synod, etc." Let us approve ourselves as worthy sons of the fathers and say with Dr. L. Fuerbringer: "I shall never forget the great earnestness that animated our fathers and their holy concern for the truth, nor the fact that they did not consider doctrinal matters of minor importance or as matters merely of different terminology and open questions, in which men may be of different opinion, as is nowadays so often the case." (*Persons and Events*, p. 177.) It is God's will and command that all Christians be one in faith and doctrine.



Essays in Hermeneutics

By M. H. FRANZMANN

NOTE.—This and the succeeding articles are designed to serve as guidelines for the writer's course in Hermeneutics at Concordia Seminary. They are to be viewed, therefore, merely as a summation of time-honored and time-tested hermeneutical materials. They are, of course, to be supplemented by lectures and by practice. I should like to express especial indebtedness to L. Fuerbringer's *Theological Hermeneutics*, Terry's *Biblical Hermeneutics*, and Torm's *Hermeneutik des Neuen Testaments*. My debt to Luther is so great and so obvious in what follows that it need hardly receive special notice. Since these articles are to be the first steps toward a textbook on Hermeneutics, it was thought that they might interest a wider circle and might benefit from the suggestions and criticisms of our brethren, which are herewith invited.

INTRODUCTORY

Hermeneutics is that branch of theology which sets forth the principles that are to guide us in the interpretation of Scripture; in other words, it is the theory of exegesis, or interpretation.

For the Lutheran theologian hermeneutical questions are anything but academic questions. Our life as Christians and as a Church depends on the Word; and since the Word is the ultimate authority, the Church of the *sola Scriptura* dare not be indifferent to the manner of its interpretation. "We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament alone, as it is written Ps. 119:105: 'Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet and a Light unto my path.' And St. Paul: 'Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed.' Gal. 1:8." As long as these solemn and stately words of the Formula of Concord are taken seriously in the Lutheran Church, there should be little need to vindicate the place of Hermeneutics in the theological curriculum.

In thus asserting the sole authority and power of Scripture, our Confessions are but reverting to the convictions of the Church catholic, which confesses in the Nicene Creed: "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, *who spake by the Prophets*." And the Confessions are also speaking the

distinct accents of Luther, whose utterances on the sole authority and sole power of the Word are a veritable *florilegium* of fresh and bracing theological thought on this point. For him the Word and the Word alone is the place where, and the means by which, man meets God: "Wo Gottes Wort nicht ist, wohnt Gott nicht, man baue ihm ein Haus, so gross man wolle." Man cannot see Him outside the Word: "Gottes Wort muss uns zu Huelfe kommen, um Gott recht zu treffen, dass man ihn hoeren, sehen, greifen, fassen und erkennen moege." "Allein durch das Wort kann Gott ergriffen werden; stellt man sich recht zum Worte, dass man es liebt, und meint es von Herzen, so wird Gott auch geliebt." Without the Word there is no road to heaven; to essay to establish a private road thither is insolence: "Es soll sich niemand unterstehen, mit Gott zu handeln ohne das Wort, oder sich einen sonderlichen Weg gen Himmel zu bauen." For there and only there, in God's Word, is Christ to be found: "Gott hat uns kein ander Mittel gegeben als sein goettliches Wort, darin man allein Christum hoert." By it and it alone is the Holy Spirit given: "Gott will den Heiligen Geist geben durch das Wort; ohne das Wort will er es nicht tun." Over against the claim of this Word neither the "harlot Reason" nor "experience" has any claim whatsoever; that is the will of the Holy Ghost who by that Word does His work: "Der Heilige Geist will die Wahrheit so angebunden haben, dass man Vernunft und alle eigene Gedanken und Fuehlen hintenansetze und *allein* an dem Worte hange." There is indeed no choice: "Das Wort Gottes reisst uns von allen Dingen, das nicht Gott ist." There is the same sharp either-or here as in all God's dealings with man: "Wenn bei uns Gottes Wort nicht ist, so sind wir im Reiche des Teufels und sind junge Teufel und Teufelskinder. Also sagt der Herr Christus auch zu Petro, da er widerriet, dass er nicht in Judaeam ziehen sollte: Hindere mich nicht, du Teufel. Aber wer Gottes Wort hat, der ist ein junger Gott."

"Wer Gottes Wort hat, der ist ein junger Gott." The Church that has the Word is impregnable; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And it is the sole business of Hermeneutics to see to it that we really have the Word that spells our life. Positively, Hermeneutics is to lead us into Scripture in such a way that its perpetually fresh and in-

finite life may be constantly open to us and in progressive abundance be ours. (Luther: *Dass man das Wort studiert und lernt, soll nicht allein ein oder zwei Jahre waehren, denn es ist Gottes Wort, welches unendlich ist.*") Negatively, Hermeneutics can provide a defense against the two gravest dangers that ever threaten the Church of the Word: satiety and the perversion of Scripture. Satiety can arise when Exegesis is permitted to degenerate into a sort of Dogmatics in reverse, a procedure that does disservice to both Dogmatics and to Exegesis; for the pleasant and salubrious pools of Systematic Theology cease to be so when they cease to be fed by the living waters of Exegesis. A sound Hermeneutics can provide defense against the wresting of Scripture, too, against error and falsification; for it can make us critical of men's interpretations of Scripture and will constantly drive us back into Scripture and so place us, again and again, under the influence of the Spirit, who leads into all truth. If this be deemed a high claim for a humble subbranch of theology, it should be remembered that the claim is made only on the basis of the fact that a sound Hermeneutics keeps us with, and so under, the Word. It is hard not to quote Luther again: "*Der Herr haelt dich mit seiner Hand, so lange du sein Wort hast.*" And: "*Gott kann und will Geduld mit uns haben, wenn wir am Worte festhalten.*"

THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

It is, or should be, a truism that the principles governing the interpretation of a document ought to be derived from, and in keeping with, the nature of that document; that, for instance, poetry be interpreted as poetry with due regard for the nature and conventions of that literary genus; that a novel be interpreted as a novel and not as a chronicle or a tract for the times. Accordingly, the principles that are to guide us in the interpretation of Scripture must be derived from the nature of Scripture itself. 2 Pet. 1:21 may serve to indicate the nature of the documents that are the object of Biblical interpretation: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." In Scripture God is speaking by men, has spoken by men, "at sundry times and in divers manners . . . in times past." The oracles of God are not a book fallen from heaven; rather, God spoke through men at a

certain time, in a certain place, and in certain language. "*Men spake*" — that is one aspect of Scripture, the aspect that it shares with every other document ever written. The other aspect lies in the fact that here *God* spoke through men, and in this aspect Scripture is unique. We have in Scripture God speaking *once*, at a certain point in history, by men; and God speaking *once and for all*. We might, then, picture the interpreter approaching the sacred text through three concentric circles: the circle of language, the circle of history, and the circle of theology, or of Scripture. The first two of these circles are a recognition of the fact that in Scripture God spoke once in the tongues of men at a certain point in history. The third circle is a recognition of the fact that in thus speaking God has spoken once and for all; that Scripture is a unity by virtue of the one Spirit that inspired all the books of the canon. It is a recognition also of the implications of Scripture for us, of the fact that Scripture is "*profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." That these three circles are distinct in analysis only and must inevitably interlink and interlock in practice should be understood at the outset and will become more obvious as we proceed.

I. THE CIRCLE OF LANGUAGE

Wiewohl das Evangelium durch den Heiligen Geist gekommen ist und taeglich kommt, so ist es doch durch das Mittel der Sprachen gekommen, muss auch dadurch behalten werden. — *Luther*.

It was Matthew Arnold, I believe, who said that a man who knows only his Bible will not even know that well. There is a modicum of truth in that, especially in so far as it applies to the language of the New Testament. The cry of the practical-minded for an exclusive concentration on the Greek of the New Testament, to the exclusion of the "heathen," may be prompted by zeal for God, but it can hardly be called a zeal according to knowledge. The long way round is the shortest way home, here as so often. One does not learn the full potentialities of a language from one book; and without a feeling for the potentialities of a language, its tones and overtones, the one book is not fully grasped either; the mind's hold remains slippery and partial. Our fathers builded wisely when they designed a broad base of secular Greek, upon which to rear the tower of specialized knowledge of New Testament

Greek; we shall do well to think long and hard before substituting a six-easy-lessons procedure for their four hard years.

Within the circle of language, we may treat, first, words in isolation (etymology and usage), and then words in relation to one another (grammar, context, figurative language).

ETYMOLOGY

As regards etymology, we shall do well to remember that it is, in most cases, an excellent starting point in the study of a word, but usually no more than that. Exegesis of the word-picture variety usually sins in the direction of overreliance on etymology. How insufficient etymology alone is for the interpretation of a word may be seen in the case of words with no recorded usage, where there is nothing but etymology to go by, words like *ἐπιούσιος* in the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, where etymology alone has led to such Babelish confusion of interpretation as "daily," "supersubstantial," "of tomorrow," "necessary," "of the future," and "of the future kingdom." In the case of *hapax legomena* and of newly formed compounds (e. g., *θεοδίδακτος*, 1 Thess. 4:9) etymology renders a substantive service. But commonly it is useful chiefly as fixing the concrete sensuous basis upon which usage has built the structure of actual meaning and connotation (e. g., *συναντιλαμβάνεται*, Rom. 8:26; note that the usage as observed in Luke 10:40 is the more helpful). We dare not forget that the vast majority of the New Testament words have behind them hundreds of years of history, especially the epoch-making history of God's inscripturated revelation of Himself (LXX), the incarnation of the Son of God, and the coming of the Holy Ghost.

USAGE

In regard to usage, it is important to be clear on the nature of New Testament Greek. It is, first of all, non-literary Greek, the spoken language of the people. That does not mean that it is vulgar (in the derogatory sense) or illiterate Greek; it does mean that "the Holy Ghost spoke that language in which the largest possible number of people could understand Him" (Moulton). And it means that the documents of non-literary Greek, the papyri, ostraka, and inscriptions, are invaluable for establishing the connotations that New Testament words had for their first readers; that books like Moul-

ton and Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri* and Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East*, as well as dictionaries like Bauer's, which take cognizance of non-literary usage, should be on the shelves of every New Testament exegete. There can never again be talk of a Biblical Greek in the old sense, or of a "language of the Holy Ghost."

But that is not the whole story. There is also the ever-present possibility of Semitic influence. The authors of the New Testament were, with one exception, bilingual and probably thought in Aramaic. And the influence of the Septuagint, all-pervasive and incalculable, must always be reckoned with. Especially in religious and ethical concepts the Greek Old Testament is the immediate and living background to the New Testament vocabulary.

The context, especially the immediate context, will also play an important role in the determination of usage. Any great new event brings with it new words and fills old words with new meanings (one need but think of the effect of two world wars and of atomic fission on our present-day vocabulary), and the event that marked the turning point of the world's history was no exception. And so, in the last analysis, the whole of the New Testament must help determine the meaning of its parts; this is the so-called Hermeneutical Circle, the working from the part to the whole and back again from the whole to the part. Practically, this points to the importance of having a wide knowledge of the whole Bible, especially the Greek Bible of both Testaments, for the interpretation of any part of it; and it underlines the value of the concordance, which enables us to focus and bring to bear that knowledge without undue consumption of time or the danger of omitting anything essential.

Usage works in various ways. As we trace the development of meaning, we note that in New Testament usage some words *deepen* in meaning; for example, the Greek εὐρίνη has, by way of the Septuagint, taken on the richer and more inclusive sense of the Hebrew *shalom*. Other words are *revaluated*, as the word κόσμος, which passes from the sense of "the harmoniously ordered universe" to that of "the world as opposed to God." Others *appreciate*; so δοῦλος and the whole complex of words denoting servitude and humility,

words infinitely ennobled by the New Testament. Again, the development may amount to a *complete change*; so the use of χάρις to denote the love of God which forgives sins, a sense not prepared for by the Septuagint, which uses ἔλεος for this sense; or the word μυστήριον as used by St. Paul. Or we may find a *new concrete application of established terms*, as in the case of παρουσία, used of royal or imperial visits in Hellenistic and Roman times, but given the specific sense of the Second Coming in the New Testament.

We must, of course, distinguish between general and particular usage, between general *koine* usage and that of the New Testament; and within the New Testament, between the general New Testament usage and that of a St. John or a St. Paul. The immediate context and particular usage is decisive in any given case. So in using a concordance, in the case of a Pauline usage, the Pauline parallels receive primary consideration. It is in the matter of usage that the value of the larger dictionary, with its careful classification of usage and grouping of parallels, becomes evident. Not that the dictionary is a substitute for independent study. It is a good map for the way; but each must go the way himself if he would really interpret, that is, meet the text and receive its impact at first hand. At the level of language, too, Scripture must interpret Scripture. The concordance and the dictionary are indispensable aids to firsthand acquaintance but not a surrogate for it.

GRAMMAR

In the matter of grammar, the present generation of exegetes is more fortunate than any generation of scholars before it. The vast accessions of comparative material in the field of popular or vernacular Greek in the last fifty years, together with an unprepossessed study of the sacred texts themselves, has cleared away the grammatical fog that darkened earlier exegesis on the grammatical side. No longer will the structure of New Testament Greek be tortured to fit the classical pattern. There is perhaps, rather, a tendency to exaggerate the difference between *koine* and classical Greek. The student well grounded in classical Greek is not entering an altogether alien world when he takes up the study of the *koine*. The changes are all in the direction of what seems 'natural' to him as an English-speaking person; a grammar

of fifty pages can tell him all that he needs to know, to begin with, of the peculiarities of the later Greek. The present writer read his Greek New Testament for years, and not unprofitably, without benefit of any special grammar whatever. There were, to be sure, some puzzles, but really very few that further reading and continued observation did not clear up satisfactorily. New Testament Greek is, after all, Greek, popular Greek, which has transcended the dialectical boundaries of the earlier periods and has relaxed, not abrogated, the strict regularity of the classical literary Greek.

There is still a sharp division among New Testament scholars as to the Semitic influence on the structure of New Testament Greek. The fact, noted above in another connection, that the authors were with one exception born Jews and spoke and wrote Greek as a second language and the influence of the Semitizing Greek of the Septuagint make it precarious to minimize the Semitic influence. On the other hand, the study of the papyri and other documents of late popular Greek has shown that many features once considered Semitisms occur, at least sporadically, in non-Semitic popular Greek, and that should make us wary of exaggeration.

CONTEXT

Consideration for the connection in which a word or group of words occurs is among the most elementary rules for the interpretation of any text. But like all commonplaces, it is easily forgotten, especially when we should *like* the text to mean something; when we have hit upon a bright idea, homiletically valuable, which we should like to "get out" of the text. It is indicative that so many exegetical questions take the form, "*Can* this text mean so and so?"

The immediate context is the most important and is usually decisive. In 1 Thess. 2:6, for instance, the sense of ἐν βάρει εἶναι is fixed by the contrast with 6a and the example of the nurse in the following verse, rather than by the remoter verse 9, so that we are justified in translating "we might have stood upon our dignity" with Goodspeed, rather than "we might have been burdensome" with the Authorized Version.

Where there is no immediate context, as is the case in some of the loosely joined series of exhortations in St. Paul

or in an isolated passage like Rom. 16:17 ff., consideration of the remoter and remotest context is imperative. The whole larger context of St. Paul's treatment of error and errorists in *Galatians*, *Colossians*, and 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, with its drastic rejection of the misleaders and its tender concern for the misled, would cast much light on the scope and meaning of the passage in *Romans*, which breaks in so unexpectedly into the chapter of greetings.

The connection of thought which we call context is variously established. The connection may be merely historical, the chronological sequence of events. For instance, the time and place of the Sermon on the Mount, so obvious in St. Luke and clear enough in St. Matthew, ought in themselves have been enough to preclude the characterization of the Sermon as "die grundlegende Predigt" or as "the inaugural discourse of the Kingdom." Or the connection may be at once historical and dogmatical, as when St. Paul in *Romans* 4 argues from the sequence of events in *Genesis* concerning the connection between circumcision and the imputation of righteousness.

Or the connection may be logical, as in the discourse on avarice and care in Matt. 6:19-34, where verse 24 ("No man can serve two masters") indicates the connection between the two apparently disparate themes; the higher unity is to be found in the idea of the divided heart.

Or again the connection may be psychological, dependent on feeling or association of ideas, as often in highly personal epistles like *Philippians* and 2 *Corinthians*; or as in 1 Thess. 5:16-22, where the mention of prayer and thanksgiving leads naturally, if not by inevitable logic, to the giving of directions for the worship life of the church.

To sum up, in the case of a passage not immediately clear we look first to the immediate context, then to the remoter context of the work in which the passage occurs, then to the whole body of works by the same author, then to the whole New Testament, and then to the whole Bible. Here again, as in the case of usage, we let Scripture interpret Scripture.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Though not as luxuriant in its imagery as the Old Testament, where cedar trees bow down and the floods clap their hands and the warhorse saith ha, ha among the trumpets, yet the New Testament is rich and various in its use of

figurative language. In this respect, as in many others, the New Testament is what Deissmann calls it, a *Volksbuch*; for figurative language is frequently anything but literary — a glance at our own slang, with its tremendous and bizarre metaphors, is enough to convince one of the absolutely “popular” character of the figurative. And the Spirit who so moved men to speak shows Himself as the Spirit of Him who knoweth our frame; for figurative language appeals to every man, and it appeals to the whole man — try to imagine yourself at a sickbed with the purely conceptual equivalent of the Twenty-Third Psalm! —; as over against strictly literal and purely conceptual language, it addresses itself not only to the intellect but also to the will and to the emotions of men. It *moves* men, in the manner as well as in the substance of its speaking.

The figures are drawn from manifold aspects of contemporary life. For an understanding of them an exact knowledge of the times, customs, and usages of the New Testament world are a prerequisite. Here the circle of history interlocks with the circle of language; language is inseparable from life.

The purpose of figurative language is to illuminate a relationship or a state in one domain by means of a comparable relationship in another. Since the figure never completely coincides with the thing to be illuminated or clarified, the cardinal point in the interpretation of figurative language is to discern carefully that quality of the figure which the author evidently wishes to denote as explanatory to the idea. In other words, an understanding of the author's intent can be gained only by a careful but withal plastic and imaginative determination of the *tertium comparationis*. The *tertium* may be very limited, as when Jesus compares Himself to a vine, or when the Church is compared to a bride, or when St. Paul designates himself the nurse or the father of the Thessalonians. The context will make clear just what the point of comparison is, even where there is such a heaping up of images as in *Jude* 12 and 13.

This holds also for the extended figure, the parable; the point (in some cases, points) of comparison must be ascertained and the various components of the parable viewed in relation to it. Our Lord's own interpretations of parables

offer us sure guidance here; although His own words also do not justify the belief that the interpretation of a parable is necessarily easy. The parables serve to conceal as well as to reveal. But here, too, it will be given to the believing heart to know the mysteries of the Kingdom; a devout and humble searching will accomplish more here than any crassly schematic theory of the parable.

We might note in closing that in the religious sphere particularly we are often forced to speak figuratively, simply because there is no other way to express the truth. The idea of unreality which some naive minds associate with the figurative in religion, as in poetry, has no place here. The ultimate beauty of music is such that it can be expressed in no other terms than music; yet no one questions the reality of that beauty just because it cannot be reduced to a literally conceptual statement. The many mansions of Our Lord's discourse and the Golden Jerusalem of the Apocalypse are a more "real" heaven than any abstractly literal statement of it; and Luther's letter to his little boy is sounder theological sense than unscripturally philosophic adumbrations of the unknowable. The golden mean in interpretation lies somewhere between the extremes of an intellectual exegesis, on the one hand, which rationalizes away the flesh and blood of Scriptural expression and leaves only the bare bones of an abstract thought; and a false sort of literalism, on the other hand, which makes the inspired writers subject to all the "primitive" and naive notions that first-century flesh was heir to.

(To be continued)



With Reference to the Formula of Absolution

By W. G. POLACK

There is some discussion in various parts of Synod regarding our formula of absolution.

Let us say at the outset that the wording of any such formula belongs in the field of things indifferent, so long as the doctrine of the Office of the Keys is maintained. For that reason we can and do have more than one formula, namely, the Declaration of Grace, p. 6, *The Lutheran Hymnal*, and the Absolution, p. 16 and p. 48, *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

The *Concordia Cyclopaedia*, under "Absolution (Liturgical)" rightly states: "It is immaterial whether this proclamation be termed 'Declaration of Grace' or 'Absolution.' In either case the forgiveness of sins declared in the Gospel is actually transmitted to all believers."

In our circles, owing to the desire for liturgical uniformity, the exclusive use of our so-called "Absolution" was well-nigh universal until the old *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-book* was introduced in our circles.

What is Lutheran usage in this respect?

It is apparent from the old Lutheran liturgies, or *Kirchenordnungen*, that there has never been anything approaching uniformity in the formula of absolution. Whatever the differences in the wording, however, the power of the Office of the Keys has not been set aside, minimized, or rejected.

The various forms of the "general" absolution grew out of the formula of the "private" absolution, as the Lutheran churches retained "Private Confession" for some time, in some places for several centuries. However, the medieval Roman form of absolution, which was deprecative, was not used. Instead, a declarative form of absolution was formulated. Lambert, in *Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association*, quotes a medieval form of absolution, as follows: "Almighty, eternal God, remit this Thy confessing servant his sins according to Thy goodness, in order that the guilt of conscience, as punishment, may do him no more harm, and the indulgence of Thy goodness is valuable to his pardon. Through Jesus Christ, etc."

During the Middle Ages there was no unanimity in the Roman Church as to the form of absolution in the exomologesis of the sinner. Whatever place the priest took in reconciling the penitent to the Church, the actual forgiveness of sin was left to God. It was Thomas Aquinas who brought the whole matter to a conclusion by teaching that the priest through the power of the keys, as instrument and servant of God, can set aside everything that hinders entrance into heaven. As Baptism, a lifeless means, works forgiveness, so the priest, as a living instrument and as minister of God, works forgiveness of sin and remittance of punishment in the sacrament of penance. He paralleled the formula "ego absolvo te" with the baptismal formula "ego baptizo te."

As indicated in Luther's statement in the Small Catechism, the Reformer retained the "ego absolvo te," basing it, however, on nothing else than the Word of Grace, the Gospel. Luther, too, paralleled "ego absolvo te" with "ego baptizo te," but for him it was in both acts the promises of the Gospel that made them effective; nothing else. "When a servant of the Church baptizes a child on the command of Christ, you do hear a mere man speaking, who is personally a sinner like yourself; but he is acting at God's command. Therefore when he says: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father,' etc., you should hear and accept these words as if God Himself were speaking. Likewise when in absolution your sins are forgiven, then doubt as little as though God Himself had spoken the words. For God Himself does pronounce this sentence upon you that you should be free of your sins." (Erl. 32, 121.)

Harnack, in his *Lehrbuch der Liturgik*, Vol. II, points out that the Lutheran churches generally did not use Luther's form. We have it in the Small Catechism, as follows: "As thou believest, so be it done unto thee. And by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive thee thy sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Depart in peace." (*Triglotta*, p. 555.) Harnack finds it only in the Saxon churches, *Naumberg* KO, 1537, and *Dresden* KO, 1581; it is also in the *Jueterbogk* KO, 1562. The majority of the German church orders have such statements as: "I absolve thee of all thy sins" ("Ich spreche dich frei, los und

ledig aller deiner Suende"). Others have a "declaration" of the forgiveness of sins. This "declaration," however, was held to be a personal application of the forgiveness of sins. Some orders combine the latter two forms. (Cf. also Lochner's *Hauptgottesdienst*, p. 185 f.)

In the transfer of the Lutheran Church to American soil, all these types were brought over. The *Common Service Book*, in keeping with its purpose, to present a consensus of the liturgies of the sixteenth century, gives the absolution in the form of the Declaration of Grace, as we have it. (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 6.) In the Order for Public Confession, however, it has this form, which includes the Retention: "Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us, and for the sake of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of His dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, forgiveth us all our sins. As a Minister of the Church of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore declare unto you who do truly repent and believe in Him the entire forgiveness of all your sins: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

"On the other hand, by the same authority, I declare unto the impenitent and unbelieving, that so long as they continue in their impenitence, God hath not forgiven their sins, and will assuredly visit their iniquities upon them, if they turn not from their evil ways, and come to true repentance and faith in Christ, ere the day of grace be ended."

Loeche's *Agende fuer christliche Gemeinden des lutherischen Bekenntnisses* (our copy is dated 1844), used by the Loeche churches until it was superseded by our Synodical *Kirchen-Agende*, has three *Absolutionsformeln*, none of which follow Luther's form, but all of them are in keeping with the forms generally used in the German Lutheran churches in Europe.

Lochner's *Hauptgottesdienst* gives the "Declaration of Grace" (same as *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 6) as the first form of absolution. He cites eleven church orders for this usage. A second form of absolution, that of Bugenhagen in Wittenberg, 1524, is presented in these words: "The almighty, merciful God forgive you your sins, and I at the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the stead of the holy Church, absolve you (sage euch frei, ledig und los) of all your sins, in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Then follows the "confession" of the minister: "Since I also am burdened with many weaknesses, pray God faithfully for me, that I may carry on and fulfill this ministry diligently to His glory, to your and my comfort and salvation, as it is written, Ps. 123: 'Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.'"

In the German *Kirchen-Agende* of our Synod (1866), which followed the Saxon Orders, we have the formula of absolution as customarily used today in our circles and taught to the children in our Catechism. It retains Luther's: "I forgive thee," etc. Another form, practically lost sight of today, is in the "Exhortation at Communion" (*Kirchen-Agende*, 1866, pp. 233—236), in which the Confession of sins and the Absolution are stated in the form of a prayer.

The other American Lutheran synods generally use the Declaration of Grace as in the United Lutheran Church's *Common Service Book* and in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, referred to above. In addition, several use one or more alternate forms.

The Augustana Synod, in its *The Hymnal*, has a very simple form on p. 563: "May the Almighty, Eternal God, in His infinite mercy and for the sake of our Savior, Jesus Christ, forgive all our sins, and give us grace to amend our lives, and with Him obtain eternal life. Amen." In the Order of the Holy Communion, this form is given (p. 594): "If this be your sincere confession, and if with penitent hearts you earnestly desire the forgiveness of your sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, God, according to His promise, forgiveth you all your sins; and by the authority of God's Word and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare unto you that God, through His grace hath forgiven all your sins; in the Name of God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The *Lutheran Hymnary* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in both the Morning Service and the Order of Holy Communion uses the Declaration of Grace as in the *Common Service Book*.

The *American Lutheran Hymnal* of the American Lutheran Church, in both its orders for Morning Service, retains simply the Declaration of Grace of the *Common Service Book*.

Homiletics

The Nassau Pericopes

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 6:19-23

The Text and the Day. — "Our children return to school." Text gives good material for a "school," or an "education," sermon. Complete training of child includes as a major point the presentation by word and example of a proper set of values (goals) for life. Adequate presentation demands a knowing and a doing by presenters (parents, pastors, teachers, Christians). In today's text, Jesus helps to establish this.

Notes on Meaning. — The word "corrupt" may be equally well translated *consume*. The latter will probably give our hearers a clearer approach. — "Lay up" does not mean earn. Gifts may be accumulated to form treasures. — "Light of the body," as sun is the light to the earth. — "Single eye," in contrast to moral double sight, which obscures and blurs. Cf. v. 24. Example: The Pharisees saw double: would have God and a carnal Messiah. "Light that is in thee," the light of revelation by the Spirit of God, which is unobscured, unblurred, a true presentation.

Preaching Pitfalls. — Vv. 19-21 is not a denunciation of treasures per se. The "treasures" of the text are more clearly defined if we say "what we treasure on earth." This is more in harmony with v. 21. We should not give the hearer the impression that the text speaks primarily of dollars and cents.

Vv. 22-23. Three sermons and an exegetical study left this reader in utter confusion because an attempt was made to base applications on known eye ailments of our day. That probably would be the plight of the hearer if done in a sermon by us.

Preaching Emphases. — Although no direct Gospel statement is made in the text, the whole tenor of the text leads into Gospel messages. "Treasures in heaven": God's love, forgiveness, assurance of eternal life, etc., are the heavenly treasures. "Light that is in thee" — the knowledge of divine promises and their acceptance at face by faith is the light that

drives out the darkness of sin, ignorance, despair. That light has its inception and continuance in the revelation of God's love by the Holy Ghost.

Problem and Goal. — Men live by the set of values they adopt for life. Christians are conscious of the wrong evaluations which the flesh and the world will present to us and our children. Only those values set by God in Christ are absolute and totally worth while.

Outline:

TWO WORTH-WHILE GOALS FOR LIFE

I. Lasting treasures

- A. The possibility of establishing what constitutes real treasures, v. 20
- B. The importance of establishing what constitutes real treasures, v. 21
- C. The result of possessing such treasures

II. An enlightened perspective

- A. Is the result of illumination of the Spirit of God
- B. Demands a single eye
- C. Removes darkness

H. B. ROEPE

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

EPH. 3:14-19

The Text and the Day. — This is the time of anniversaries and openings of Lutheran seminaries and colleges (*Luth. Annual* 1948, Aug. 29—Sept. 15) and of Christian day schools and membership classes. Knowledge is power.

Notes on Meaning. — V. 14: The cause is advanced (chap. 2:13—3:13) as the salvation of the Gentiles, their incorporation into the body of Christ, their adoption into the family of God, the invisible Church. Paul's tireless missionary activity in view of the Gentiles' participation is on bended knee, intercessory prayer attending his ardent efforts in indoctrinating the new and old, the young and aged, members. May God have mercy on pastors and congregations who neglect indoctrination! — V. 15: The whole family are those to whom God has given Himself as Father, to whom He has

given power to become the sons of God. The reference to those in heaven indicates their intimate relationship with those on earth. The family of God is the invisible Church, Militant and Triumphant. Num. 6:27; Jer. 14:9; 15:16; Hos. 1:10; John 1:12; Rom. 9:26; 1 John 3:1. — V. 16: The chief concern here are those on earth, who are to be blessed by the Father with an ever-growing glory: knowledge and faith. Paul is not asking here for numerical growth. The blessing requested is the glory of increased indoctrination. Ch. 4:11-15. Indoctrination is the work of the Holy Spirit, who operates by the means of grace, not by the Law, to strengthen spiritually the man reborn of Him, for (v. 17) He leads to Jesus, John 14:26; 16:13-14; 1 Cor. 12:3, and He indoctrinates, John 16:13; 2 Cor. 3:18. God's love to us is the root and ground. Our love to Him or the brother is sometimes shifting and fickle, and we cannot know God by our love to Him. — V. 18 will have been apprehended after we have the doctrinal and practical view of the wondrous love of God revealed in Christ; for the emphasis in v. 19 is on *know*, the result and achievement of indoctrination, *knowledge* accumulated by faith. See ch. 4:11-15.

Preaching Pitfalls. — No statement of Scripture ascribes to God a universal fatherhood, not even by reason of His creatorship. His fatherhood is confined to His family, which He has named and which bears His name. Refrain from reference to a fictitious and dishonoring universal fatherhood except to drive it out of the mind of the mistaught hearer. — This text in its context is sometimes applied to the visible Church for the promotion of visible racial integration. Such application is a severe pitfall.

Preaching Emphases. — Whoever resents indoctrination neglects God's glory and His means of grace, blurs within himself God's glorious image and hampers its restoration, renders ineffective in himself and others God's answer to the First Petition, and is in danger of frustrating his own personal salvation. — To the Father, to the Son, to the Holy Spirit, the work of indoctrination is ascribed. He has called us into His service for this work, Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:27-28. Pastor and people are to grow in the knowledge of God, in faith, in sanctification, that is, in the image of God. Spiritual ignorance is not consistent with God's gracious will to fill us with

His fullness and to dwell in us as in His temples. Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2-3; Col. 1:9-10; 2 Pet. 3:18.

Problem and Goal. — We must arouse each member to bear a burning interest in the welfare of his congregation and the entire Church by praying unceasingly for its indoctrination, for more glorious reflection of God's image, for the greater beautification of Christ's bride on earth. — Each member must be reminded of his duty to God, to himself, and to the congregation to seek indoctrination. Membership classes, Bible classes, refresher courses, schools, exceed in importance any other considerations, and regular church attendance to hear and do indoctrinating sermons must be conscientiously and evangelically stressed.

Outline:

OUR INDOCTRINATION

- I. It is the gracious concern and work of the Holy Trinity.
 - A. Of the Father, who never declines the petition for spiritual growth;
 - B. Of the Son, who has called Paul and us to indoctrinate in His name;
 - C. Of the Holy Spirit, who strengthens the inner man with the power of knowledge and faith by the knowledge of Christ, the means of grace.
- II. It is the restoration and perfecting of the divine image in us.
 - A. The divine image is knowledge, righteousness by faith, v. 17; holiness, v. 20 b, 16 a.
 - B. The effect of indoctrination in us is progression in the divine image.
 - C. Consistent with the riches of God's glory.
- III. Therefore our desire must be to become indoctrinated and to indoctrinate others.
 - A. Express this desire by prayer and intercession.
 - B. Subdue the natural tendency to spiritual loathing, lethargy, and laziness.
 - C. Diligently use the means of indoctrination by which God satisfies our growing desire.

Conclusion: 2 Cor. 4:6.

G. H. SMUKAL

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MARK 2:23-28

The Text and the Day. — The emphasis in the Propers for this Sunday is on the spirit of unity and humility among Christians. Very appropriately the Gospel brings the legalistic attitude toward the Sabbath observance as an example of pride which would disturb Christian unity. Into that picture our text fits perfectly.

Notes on Meaning. — Cornfields were fields of small grain. Footpaths ran through these fields. Disciples picked off heads of grain, rubbed them out, and ate them. The *Patres Traditionum* stated: "He who reaps the very least on the Sabbath is chargeable; and to pluck ears is a species of reaping." Mark and Matthew say the Pharisees spoke to Jesus, Luke says they spoke to the disciples. There is no contradiction. They did both. . . . It is interesting to note that Jesus did not pluck ears, and thus He was in a better position to defend His disciples. . . . Showbread "shall be Aaron's and his sons; and they shall eat it," Lev. 24:9. . . . "House of God" includes also the courts attached to the Tabernacle, Ps. 122:1. . . . There is some confusion regarding the names Ahimelech and Abiathar, cf. 2 Sam. 8:17 and 1 Sam. 22:20. Simplest explanation is that father and son were both active.

Preaching Pitfalls. — There was nothing wrong with their plucking. The smallness of the labor does not excuse it, but the Law explicitly permitted such plucking, Deut. 23:25. . . . Don't use sermon time on chronological or geographical placing of this text, since it is not given by Mark nor by the parallels, Matt. 12:1-8, Luke 6:1-5. . . . There is much we should like to say about worldliness and the Sunday, but this text does not provide a basis for such discussion. . . . These Pharisees had not tasted the real love of Jesus for sinners; therefore they still based their theology on legalistic tradition. . . . In applying this text, drawing parallels between the Sabbath and our Sunday can become very dangerous.

Preaching Emphases. — Here is a precious opportunity to emphasize the glory of our Christian freedom, based on the love of Jesus. He is not our slave driver, but our dearest Friend. His commandments do not flow out of tyranny, but out of fervent love. This must influence our whole behavior

toward Him and His Word. We want to read His Word more and man's word less as guidance in our life. Whenever man tries to give us spiritual direction, let us demand such specific passages of Scripture as Jesus quotes in our text, not mere generalities. This underlying principle of spiritual freedom applies today to giving, prayers, home devotions, church and Communion attendance, etc. We must base all admonition concerning these, not on tradition, not on Old Testament standards or laws, not on decisions of conferences or congregations, not on quotations of Luther or other church leaders, but only on the Word of God, which is filled with the freedom which Jesus earned for us.

Problem and Goal. — Our object must be to emphasize that Jesus is interested far more in the right spiritual condition of the heart than in living up to any ceremonial regulations or human traditions. All ceremonies were given to help, not to hinder, Christian faith and love and joy.

Outline:

WHAT ABOUT CEREMONIAL REGULATIONS?

- I. They were never intended for tyranny but rather for help.
 - A. Those who do not know God rightly may make His regulations look like tyranny to themselves and others.
 - B. Our text shows us by the example of David and by Jesus' own statement about the Sabbath that God is a God of love and help.
 - II. Christ is the Lord over all of them.
 - A. All Old Testament ceremonial regulations have been abolished.
 - B. Jesus wants the underlying principle of love and worship to be in evidence also today.
 - C. Only when we love Jesus, will we gladly learn His Word and do His will. W. W. STUENKEL
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EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MARK 12:28-34

The Text and the Day.—This text relates the same incident as the Gospel of the first series. The difference in approach and conclusion need not be dwelt upon. The stress in the texts at this time of the year is on reducing to practice what we know.

Notes on Meaning.—V. 28: "well"; this scribe had been impressed by Christ's authoritative tone (v. 27). "Which," not so much "which one" as rather "what sort of."—"The first" not in order, but in importance (Matthew has "the great"). Possibly the scribe had in mind the undue emphasis on ceremonial regulations at the expense of the Moral Law. Note the comparison made by the scribe (v. 33).—V. 29: Basic to the keeping of the Law is to know the Lawgiver.—V. 33: Note the forceful repetition of "all" (Ps. 103:1: "All that is within me.")—V. 31: Though Christ quoted the first commandment from Deut. 6:5 and the second from Lev. 19:18, He was the first to put these two into this juxtaposition. V. 34: "Not far," because he had the correct concept of the Law; yet not in the Kingdom, because he lacked faith in Jesus as the Messiah.

Preaching Pitfalls.—The difference between the account in Matt. 22 and Mark calls for no consideration in a sermon on this text. The motive back of the scribe's question is here of no significance. We are concerned with the Master's answer.—Observe that our text is restricted to Christ's answer to a query pertaining to the Law. In the treatment of His answer care must be taken not to give the impression that such perfect love to God and unselfish love to one's neighbor is possible to the extent of meriting God's full approval and consequent reward. The question here is *not* like that in Mark 10:17. The Gospel of salvation by grace must be introduced somewhere in the sermon.

Preaching Emphases.—Apparently the scribe had been so impressed by Christ's clean-cut and authoritative reply to the question of the Sadducees that he was ready to accept Christ's answer to his own question. For us Christ is indeed the "Teacher come from God." And the Holy Spirit, as Christ's gift to His Church, has given us an infallible record of Christ's

words and by them will also lead us into all truth, according to Christ's promise, John 16:13. — Here, as in the Sermon on the Mount, Christ emphasizes the *source* and *motive* of our conduct. It is the attitude of mind and heart that gives quality to our speech and action. The corruption of the human heart may not be overlooked (Matt. 15:19).

Problem and Goal. — Caution, on the one hand, against ceremonialism and any form of worship that does not spring from faith and love. Caution, on the other hand, against all "good works" that do not proceed from sincere love to God and unselfish love to the neighbor. Set forth how the failure to obey this fundamental law of love is the source of the world's ills and how only the love of God in Christ can redeem us individually and improve society collectively. Luther revealed not only keen spiritual insight, but also social understanding and sound pedagogical psychology when he introduced his explanation of each Commandment with "We should fear and love God." (Reflection: Would we not do well in our preaching to draw more frequently on Luther's Catechism, thus reminding our confirmed youth and adults of the abiding value of the words they once committed to memory?)

Outline:

LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW

- I. Only as we love God supremely, will we
 - A. Worship Him truly;
 - B. Serve Him gladly.
- II. Only as we love our neighbor rightly, will we
 - A. Refrain from doing him harm;
 - B. Render him all possible help.
- III. Failing in this perfect love, we are in need of forgiveness
 - A. From God, whom we chiefly offend;
 - B. From our neighbor, whom we also have grieved.

Conclusion. — We live in a hard and selfish, cold and cruel world. Be not conformed! The great need of the day is *more love*: in our homes, churches, and in society. Such love among men — love that is pure and unselfish — can be engendered only by the Holy Ghost, who through Word and Sacrament imparts to us the love of God in Christ. 1 John 3:14-17; 4:7-11, 19-21.

MARTIN WALKER

Miscellanea

Christianity and Crisis Theology

By PROF. CORNELIUS VAN TIL*

In recent times it has become quite clear that Christianity and Modernism are two mutually exclusive religions. But a third party has appeared upon the scene. It is the *Theology of Crisis*. Its chief exponents, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, were trained as Modernists. But they have been very critical of Modernism and its great theologians, Schleiermacher and Ritschl. Moreover, they claim the paternity of Luther and Calvin. Their language is frequently that of historic Protestantism. As a result, many orthodox Christians seem to think that the old Gospel has found a new and powerful expression through their mouths. We believe that this is not the case. Without in the least presuming to judge the hearts of its exponents, we shall offer evidence to prove that the *Theology of Crisis* is but a new form of Modernism.

The Bible

Barth and Brunner refer to their position as being a *Theology of the Word*. But both Barth and Brunner accept the results of negative or "higher" criticism. Both oppose the orthodox doctrine of the words of Scripture as being identical with revelation. The words of Scripture are said to become the words of God, but not until they are accepted as such. Thus the *Theology of the Word* is after all but a theology of experience, and not a theology of the Word at all. On this basic point we are back to the position of the old Modernism. (Cf. Barth: *Kirchliche Dogmatik* I, 2, p. 590; I, 1, p. 105; also Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*.)

Revelation

Barth and Brunner also speak of their position as a *Theology of Revelation*. But they oppose the orthodox idea of a *finished* revelation. According to them revelation is always an *act*. And

* Crisis Theology, or Barthianism, in both its more conservative (Barth) and its more liberal unfolding (Brunner), is still arresting the attention of thousands of students the world over. This deep interest in Barthianism induced Professor Van Til to publish a brief study of Crisis Theology in *Cheng Yen Pao*, the official magazine of the China Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. With the permission of that paper the *Presbyterian Guardian* (March 10, 1948) presented the article to its readers. Dr. Van Til is professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary, which represents the Machen group of confessing Presbyterians, and author of the widely read volume *The New Modernism*, which is an extended appraisal of Barthianism. While there are many points in the teachings of Barth and Brunner which because of their obscurity and ambiguity of expressions may be interpreted in various ways, we believe that on the whole Dr. Van Til's appraisal of the theology of the two men is essentially correct.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

it is never an act until it is *interaction* between God and man. And to take his part in this interaction, man must become more than man. Through the Holy Spirit man's act of accepting revelation becomes God's act of receiving His own Word. God can be known by God only. Thus we are back to the modernist idea of God coming to self-consciousness in man, and man coming to self-consciousness in God. (Barth: *K.D.*, I, 1, pp. 313 ff.; Brunner: *Die Mystik und das Wort*, and *Revelation and Reason*.)

God

Barth and Brunner speak much of the transcendent God. Yet they reject the orthodox doctrine of God. For them God is identical with His revelation. And as already noted, revelation is a process of interaction of God with man made divine. Barth argues that God's transcendence means His freedom to become wholly identical with man and to take man up into complete identification with Himself. For Brunner God is virtually identical with what he calls the divine-human encounter. Both are vigorously opposed to the orthodox idea of God's self-contained intertrinitarian existence. Both virtually identify God's intertrinitarian activity with His works of creation, providence, and redemption. Thus we are back to the God of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, a god made in the image of man. (Barth: *K.D.* I, chapter on "The Freedom of God"; Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*.)

Man

Barth and Brunner speak of man as having been created in the image of God and as having fallen into sin. But these ideas, they say, are not to be taken as orthodoxy takes them. The Genesis account is not to be taken as historical narrative. There was no historical Adam. There was no paradise. There was no fall. The notion of a state of perfection is rather an ideal for the future. It intimates God's intention for man, and therefore by revelation as interaction is man's ideal for himself. But God's intention may be thwarted by man; which by the process of interaction means that man never lives up to his own ideal. So we are back again to the level of Modernism. In the evolutionary process man forms for himself high ideals, but because of the situation of which he is a part, he never fully lives up to them. (Barth: *K.D.* III, 1; Brunner: *The Mediator*, p. 146; *Man in Revolt*, pp. 85 f.)

Christ

Barth and Brunner want to interpret all things Christologically. And their Christ, they contend, is the Christ of the Scriptures. This claim, too, must be denied. Their Christ is not the Christ of the historic Christian creeds. He stands for the process of interaction between God and man. God is nothing but what He is toward man in Christ, and man is nothing but what he is in Christ toward God. Identification with Christ is God's ideal for man and,

through revelation as interaction, Christ is man's ideal for himself. He is the true Adam. So we are led back again to the old modernist notion of a Christ who is naught but an idealized man. A Christ who is a mixture of a God who does not exist apart from Him, and a man who does not exist apart from Him is not the Christ of Scripture. (Barth: *K.D. I*, 2; Brunner: *The Mediator*.)

Salvation

Barth and Brunner speak much of God's sovereign grace. By the sound of the words they use, one would even think that they were Calvinists. For to them God's election is the source of man's salvation. But election, they say, must be understood Christologically. It is therefore a process. Creation itself is taken up into this process of election. A man does not really exist except in so far as he exists in Christ. Self-consciousness presupposes Christ-consciousness. All men are reprobate, but they are reprobate in Christ. Judas, says Barth, "is not against Jesus" (*K.D. III*, 1, p. 508). He is not wholly for Jesus. Neither is any one else. All men are elect; they are elect as reprobate (*idem*, p. 526). Judas represents the principle of evil that is found in all men, and Peter represents the ideal perfection in Christ that is found in all men. Christ unites the reprobate and the elect; both are destined for participation in God's glory (*K.D. II*, 2, p. 460; for Brunner cp. *Wahrheit als Begegnung*, p. 52). Thus the sovereign grace of the Crisis theologians has been made quite acceptable to the natural man. It is but the auto-soterism of the old Modernism in a new dress.

The Church

Barth and Brunner speak of election as the heart of the Church. But as they reject the orthodox doctrine of election, so also they reject the orthodox doctrine of the Church. For them the Church is identical with the process of election, as both are identical with the process which they call Christ. All men are involved in this process. As vessels of wrath they are outside, but as vessels of mercy they are inside the Church. As Scripture itself is full of contradictory systems and is but a witness to the truth, so no creed can be anything but an arrow pointing toward the truth. Thus we are back again to the level of the old Modernism with its notion of the Church as a local improvement association. (Barth: *K.D. II*, 2; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative*, p. 300; *Man in Revolt*, p. 78.)

The Commandment

Barth and Brunner speak of interpreting ethics Christologically. There is no God apart from Christ as there is no man apart from Christ. In Christ the commanding God and obedient man have coalesced. There is no other good but Christ, and there are no other duties but those to Christ. Christ is the standard of good and evil. The disobedient disobey in Christ. God's judgment upon them is reconciliation in Christ. Men cannot know that they have

sinned except in the light that they are forgiven in Christ; self-consciousness is identical with Christ-consciousness. Thus ethics is identical with the process of election. As Esau all men disobey, but as Jacobs all men obey in Christ. What God wills of us is the same as that which He wills for us and is doing within us. Thus we are back to the old Modernism according to which Christ is the impersonation of ideals which men have set for themselves in the course of the evolutionary process. (Barth: *K. D.* III, 1; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative.*)

The Last Things

Barth and Brunner deal constantly with the last things. But for them the last things have no connection with the calendar. They are not *pre* or *post* or *a* millennialists. There was no creation out of nothing. There was no historical Adam. God did not reveal Himself directly in nature and history. The virgin birth, the death, and the resurrection of Christ did not take place in history, but in superhistory. And superhistory is not measured by hours and days of ordinary history. There is no difference of date between the first and second coming of Christ. There is no difference of date between what Christ did, or rather *does*, for us and what He, through the Spirit, does within us. In Christ God has time for us; in Christ, He is buried with us, with all men. In Christ our time becomes God's time; we, all men, are risen with Him. All revelation events are aspects of the one great Resurrection Event, of which God and man are the two correlative aspects. Thus we have virtually returned to the old Modernism, which reduces historic Christianity to a monistic process philosophy. (Barth: *The Resurrection of the Dead.*)

Conclusion

Our conclusion must be that the gospel preached and taught by Barth and Brunner, though couched in orthodox-sounding terminology, is still virtually identical with the gospel of the old Modernism. It is an emasculated gospel, a gospel without God, without Christ, without grace, a gospel to the liking of the natural man, and withal a gospel of despair. It is a new Modernism more subtle and dangerous than the old.

A Vocabulary Study of "Ecclesia"

By R. T. DU BRAU

The thorough study of words contributes to the full proof of our ministry. It adds connotation to the denotation of any part of the sacred vocabulary. As to ἐκκλησία, it has been said one should banish from the mind all remembrance of its etymology. We disagree with such a categorical statement, for an examination of both etymology and the use of the word across the centuries and millennia will yield rich result in particular knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) and appreciation of a given term.

Etymology. The origin of ἐκκλησία is simple enough. It obviously derives from ἐκ-κλητός, ἐκκαλέω, "call up" (as for service), or "call out" for a meeting. The root καλ is preserved in the Latin *CAL-endae*, in the Old High German *hal-on* (*Heil*), to hail, to call. Originally, ἐκ-κλησία was a calling-out of the people from their homes and cities, but such usage was soon superimposed upon the actual assembly of those thus called out.

Classical Use. The ancient Greeks, both on the Hellespont as well as in Graeca magna, employed ἐκκλησία in strict harmony with its derivation. It was their common designation for the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessing the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public business. That the "assembled" were sometimes "called out" more tumultuously than legally, as in Syracuse, does not alter the significance of the word. Trench remarks that they were summoned out of the entire population with the exception of aliens or those who had forfeited their civil rights. The constitutional assembly at Athens was called an ἐκκλησία.

Thus ἐκκλησία became the common classic term for the congregation of the ἐκκληστοι assembled to transact the public affairs of a free state. It represented the body of free citizens called out by a herald (κήρυξ). Euripides (*Orestes* 949; 408 B. C.) and Xenophon (*Hellenica* 2:4, 28; after 362 B. C.) employ οἱ ἐκκληστοι synonymously with ἐκκλησία. Thus the word comes to mean those "gathered together," *concio*, more rarely: the place of the gathering, *concionis locus*.

Transfer to the LXX. The Ptolemaean translation renders the Old Testament terms 'edah and qahal (to call) more or less indiscriminately by συναγωγή or ἐκκλησία. In the Pentateuch only Deuteronomy employs ἐκκλησία where it signifies the general assembly of the people of Israel during the wilderness wanderings. It answers to the Hebrew qahal constantly in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Thus LXX uses ἐκκλησία for the congregation of the people of Israel, whether summoned or met for a definite purpose (e. g., 1 Kings 8:65, at the dedication of Solomon's temple) or the community of Israel collectively as a congregation. Elsewhere the word designates the people themselves, especially in their relation to God, with little reference to assembling. Neh. 13:1, where the phrase is ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ, is a striking example. So also in Deut. 23:2, 3, 4, 9; 1 Chron. 28:8; Micah 2:5. Qahal is ἐκκλησία in Ps. 22:23, 26; 35:18; 40:10; 89:6; 107:32; 149:1; Job 30:28; Lam. 1:10; Prov. 5:14; and Joel 2:16.

The New Testament Usage. Schmoller (*Handkonkordanz zum Griechischen Neuen Testament*) lists 112 occurrences of ἐκκλησία in the New Testament. The term does not occur at all in Mark, Luke, John, 1 and 2 John, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Jude.

Here we find ἐκκλησία applying to the congregation of God's people, Acts 7:38. The Christian congregation in the midst of Israel now is simply designated ἐκκλησία, without being confounded

with the Jewish community, the συναγωγή (Acts 2:47, etc.). In the New Testament, then, the word has taken a further advance. It still appears in the sense of "assembly" at times, true, as in 1 Cor. 11:18, but usually the idea is that of a body or company of believers, whether assembled or not. The ἐκκλησία called and gathered by God now are grouped collectively under the term ἐκκλησία, 1 Cor. 10:32; 12:28; Col. 1:18, etc. It is now the entire congregation of all who are called by and unto Christ, who are in His fellowship, the Church.

Here are to be noted the phrases ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ, Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:5, 15. Also: σῶμα Χριστοῦ, Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22, 23, and ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, Eph. 3:21; 5:23, 24. As a matter of fact, in the Epistle to the Ephesians ἐκκλησία denotes exclusively the entire Church.

Primarily it must be remembered, ἐκκλησία served to denote the local church. The term signifies the New Testament churches as confined to particular places, even in "houses," ἡ κατ' οἶκον ἐκκλησία, 1 Cor. 16:19, i. e., smaller congregations worshiping in individual homes. We have thus the ἐκκλησία in Thessalonica, in Asia, in Rome, etc. Every group in which the character of the Church as a whole is repeated is an ἐκκλησία and with reference to the composition of these churches they are termed ἐκκλησία τῶν ἐθνῶν, Rom. 16:4; ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων, 1 Cor. 14:33.

It is of interest to note that Luke well remembers the classic derivation of the term in Acts 19:39, ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησία ἐπιλυθῆσεται. The additional ἔννομος, elsewhere κυρία, denotes the regular in opposition to the special assembly (σύγκλητος), Acts 19:32.

Documentary Penetration. The word ἐκκλησία manifested a strange force in the post-Apostolic world. Like many other Greek technical terms, it became untranslatable. Although the Latin language was in no wise poor in expressions for "assembly" (*con-tio, comitia*, et al.), there seems to have been a feeling that no Latin term exactly covered the Greek ἐκκλησία. Thus the word was simply transcribed and Latinized, a misfortune which ultimately resulted in the usurpation of the term *Ecclesia* by the Roman Catholic Church for its own exclusive use. The Vulgate thus consistently spells *Ecclesia* with a capital E.

But to continue with our study of ἐκκλησία in some post-New Testament documents: Already the younger Pliny (62—114 A. D.) uses a Latinized *ecclesia* in his letter to Trajan (Book 10, 110): "The attorney of the City of Amisus demanded of my client Julius Piso some 40,000 denarii, which sum had been given him by the city upon approval of the council and assembly (*bule et ecclesia consentiente*), referring to thy edict, Emperor and Lord, which now forbid such gifts. . . ." (Translation my own.)

Still remembered is that discovery of a striking inscription of the year 104 A. D. from the theater in Ephesus, that same theater so well known to every reader from Acts 19. It appears that a prominent Roman official, one Vibius Salutaris, dedicated a silver shrine

to Diana (cp. Acts 19:24) and some statuettes to be placed upon a pedestal at each ἐκκλησία in the theater! (ἵνα τίθηται κατ' ἐκκλησίαν ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ [sic!] ἐπὶ τῶν βάσεων) — yes, τῷ θεάτρῳ is actually written like that in the original! Here we have at the same time a confirmation of Acts 19:32, 41, viz., that those ἐκκλησίαι were held in the theater at Ephesus. Better yet: the inscription is bilingual, and the Latin parallel text reads: "*ita ut omni ecclesia supra bases ponerentur.*" Here, then, is a simple transliteration of the Greek word. (Austrian Archaeological Institute, 1899.)

In allusion to the Temple the Church is sometimes compared to a building, Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10; Eph. 2:21; 1 Pet. 2:5; but ἐκκλησία is nowhere unequivocally used in the New Testament for the building in which any particular Christian congregation met. As the word *church* (κυριακὸν δῶμα) was originally applied to the building of Christian worship, and then extended to the ἐκκλησία itself; so, conversely, ἐκκλησία came to be transferred from the congregation to the building in the post-New Testament era.

A late third-century document, P. Oxyr. 43, a papyrus of 295 A. D., gives a list of watchmen who were distributed over the chief streets and public buildings in Oxyrrhynchus. On the verso, col. I, line 10, and col. III, line 19, we find a list of public buildings on the "beats" of watchmen Apphous Theon, and Amos Parammon. Among those buildings figure the temples of Serapis, Isis, and Caesar. Also two churches lay on their beat, the North Church, ὀύμη τῇ βορινῇ ἐκκλησία, and the South Church, ὀύμη τῇ νοτιῇ ἐκκλησία.

However, except for the transliterations into the Romance and Celtic languages, the overwhelming use of ἐκκλησία is for the Christian community, the chosen Church of God. So St. Epiphanius (315—402 A. D.) writes in the later 4th century somewhat redundantly of the Ebionites: συναγωγὴν δὲ οὗτοι καλοῦσιν τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐκκλησίαν. (*Adv. Haeres.* II, 18.)

We adduce one more document and from the time when the clouds of the Mohammedan Conquest were already gathering in the Eastern world. It is P. Oxyr. 136, the contract of a farm manager, now in the Gizeh Museum, and dated A. D. 583. It is the contract between the heirs of Flavius Apion and Serenus, a deacon, by the terms of which Serenus agrees to become overseer of certain estates for one year: "Serenus, deacon of the Holy Church (ἀγίας ἐκκλησίας), son of the sainted Apollon." . . .

The Translations. Quite correctly Harnack (*Die Mission*) called the choice of the word ἐκκλησία for the Christian Church a master stroke. Not only from Acts, but also from numerous inscriptions in the ancient synagogues we learn that the organized Hellenistic congregation of converted Jews called itself still a συναγωγή. Also in the very early Christian *usus loquendi* this term is used to designate the congregation of Christians, but only very rarely. "The word is soon smothered by those innumerable cases where ἐκκλησία is used; a term of far greater cosmopolitan

range and color, a term far more comprehensible to the city dweller in the Hellenist East." (Deissmann.)

Thus ἐκκλησία victoriously penetrated Latin and other languages across the centuries and continents: *Ecclesia*, *église*, *iglesia*, *chiesa*, *eglwys* (Welsh). The Gothic translation of Bishop Ulfilas has *aikklesjo*.

It is most reassuring to note the care with which modern translators of the New Testament distinguished between ἐκκλησία as "assembly" and as "church." Thus, to cite but one example, Acts 19:39 is translated "assembly" (A. V., B. R. V., A. R. V., Tischendorf, Douai, Goodspeed). We know that Luther with an almost inspired insight into the text wrote *Gemeinde*. The American vernacular with its uncanny instinct for pointed expression speaks of "going to meeting." In French we read *assemblée*; the Italian has *assemblea*; Spanish *asamblea*; Danish *Forsamling*; and the Swedish even *folkförsamlingen*. The modern Greek has correctly: συνέλευσις. In all these cases the Vulgate can offer only *ecclesia*.

Homiletic Observation. It is a beautiful and noteworthy feature that the elements καλεῖν and κηρύσσειν constitute some of the characteristics of the ἐκκλησία. They were terms employed in classic Greek to summon an assembly of free citizens of a free state for the orderly transaction of the business of such community. The New Testament usage inspires these terms with a new force. The members of its ἐκκλησία are called into fellowship and faith by the heralding of the Gospel. They are as the called no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens in the assembly of God; the κηρύσσειν also becomes the proclaiming and preaching of God's Word, which, in turn, calls, gathers, and enlightens the free citizens in the free estate of the redeemed, free in the liberty wherewith Christ has liberated them. In fine, God has called His people in Christ out of this world into His Church to be about the Father's business while it is day.

Steps Taken in 1867 to Compose the Differences between Wisconsin and Missouri*

By J. P. MEYER

III

At the bottom of the differences that disturbed the relation between members of the Missouri Synod and of the Wisconsin Synod in the early years of these two church bodies was the suspicion that Wisconsin had unionistic leanings, because it accepted help from unionistic mission societies in Germany. The Missouri Synod fathers frowned on all forms of unionism. Wisconsin had, as pointed out before, insisted from the very beginning on a Lutheran ordination vow, had received only Lutheran men into

* This article continues the series of historical essays which Prof. J. P. Meyer is at present publishing in the *Northwestern Lutheran*.

its service from the unionistic societies, and had assured itself of the Lutheranism of the men sent over by submitting them to a colloquy. Our fathers, however, felt not only under obligation to the societies for the help which they had sent, but they accepted their help with genuine gratitude.

Yet if Wisconsin was to do its work as a Lutheran Church in this country in truth, the original condition of unclarity must not be maintained indefinitely. The trumpet must give a clear tone. In 1867 the young synod took the decisive step of clarifying its position on Unionism—at the risk of losing the friendship and support of the German societies. We have already studied both the majority and the minority committee report as recorded in the proceedings of the 1867 convention. But that was not the end. We hear echoes rumbling still in subsequent synodical reports.

How intense was the struggle, and how deeply the hearts of our fathers were moved, when they took their decisive stand in 1867, we may feel from some of the throbbing paragraphs in President Bading's report to the Synod in 1868.

"Another important experience of the past synodical year, one fraught with grave consequences, pertains to the relation of the Synod toward the united societies within the Prussian State Church. Because of our connection with friends in the Union we have for years been charged by staunch Lutherans with secret unionistic leanings, our faithfulness to our Confession has been questioned, we have been branded as un-Lutheran, and our work has been opposed in our fields as though it were that of an un-Lutheran body.

"Let us concede frankly and honestly that, although many of the charges raised against us were exaggerated, unfair, malicious, not according to love which corrects; yet some things really touched a sore spot. Our attitude, it is true, was for some time an unstable one: on the one hand, the open confession of all the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, as the Synod voiced it practically every year; on the other hand, our connection with societies within the United Church who consider the Union as beneficial and God-pleasing.

"Our love, I may say, on the one hand, toward our dear Church and her Confessions, on the other hand, our gratitude toward friends who helped us in our need and by sending us valuable workers made us what we are, often placed our Synod in a light which neither friend nor foe understood. Especially the feeling of gratitude kept our Synod back from giving full expression openly to its inner confessional firmness which was present all the while, and from rejecting unequivocally the charges of unionistic leanings by means of a clear testimony against both a doctrinal and an administrative Union.

"These vacillations, brethren, must come to an end. The Epistle to the Hebrews says: *It is a good thing that the heart be established by grace.* The various trends in the Church today

demand firmness of us; the honor of our Synod, the importance of the matter, truth and honesty, compel us, the Church of God, to tell both friend and foe where we stand in the movements of the day, in the heated battle between Unionism and Lutheranism, in the union endeavors of the synods of our land."

Still quoting from President Bading's report of 1868, we find the following description of the tactics employed by Unionists: "Their motto indeed is peace and love; but while preachers of unbelief, teachers of false and pernicious doctrine, antichrists, men steeped in fleshlimindedness and worldlimindedness, enjoy full freedom, toleration, and peace under their rule, yet they wage relentless war against the Lutheran Church, and in their memorials denounce faithful Lutherans as fanatics. . . .

"In times like these, of a great and common danger, also our Synod of Wisconsin is duty bound to draw the sword, to let its trumpet sound a clear note, to break its former considerate silence, and to declare that we deeply deplore the introduction of the Union with its total disregard for existing differences and for the ruin of our dear Church; that we pray God to avert from us His stern judgment and not to deal with us as we well deserve by our manifold unfaithfulness and indifference.

"We hope that no one will construe our action as ingratitude. We simply cannot do otherwise, and we believe that love and gratitude may well have a place in the heart together with a confession of the truth and a testimony against unrighteousness."

Still quoting from President Bading's report. "Our relation of many years' standing toward the societies of Langenberg and Berlin has undergone a radical change. Our resolutions of last year against the Union have enraged the *Neue Ev. Kirchenzeitung*, have aroused feelings of grief and indignation within the two societies, and have caused the Ev. Consistory to issue statements against several of our members which deeply affect their relation to our Synod.

"Since both societies have written to me requesting further explanation and discussion, but since I could not take any other stand than the one voiced by the Synod, both societies have addressed official memorials to our Synod. They will be presented in due time, and demand an answer from our body."

A committee to whom this matter was referred reported as follows:

"As a result of the protest issued by our previous convention against the Union both mission societies have declared their relation to our Synod to be abrogated. The letters containing this declaration demand a thorough answer, not merely according to common custom, but because of several points contained in them.

"Your Committee recommends

a) that we authorize and instruct the honorable President to answer the letters;

b) that, while acknowledging that the united societies were justified from their standpoint to break off relations with the Wisconsin Synod, we express once more to both societies our heartfelt thanks for the valuable help which they have rendered us."

In 1869 President Bading reported that because of our stand toward the Union we were branded as "fanatics" by some who also compared us with the traitor Judas, while in Lutheran circles real joy was voiced because Wisconsin had definitely broken with the Union.

In 1863 President Bading had gone to Europe to solicit financial support for our College in Watertown, then to be erected. His presidential report in 1869 contains the following paragraph:

"As a result of our separation from, and our position to, the Union an official document was received from the Consistory in Berlin informing the Synod that the Consistory with full approval of the government decided to withhold from us the interest on the monies collected in Prussia, and to apply this meanwhile to the training and support of volunteers for service in German Evangelical churches and schools of congregations in North America that are in agreement with the Union." — If my information is correct, these monies were paid from that time on regularly to the German Evangelical Synod of North America up to World War I. (J. P. M.)

Our Synod adopted the following committee report:

"that our Synod lays no claim to the collection gathered for us in the Prussian State Church, and instructs our President to inform the Ev. Consistory in Berlin to that effect."

Let us thank God for the victory of confessionalism which He granted to our fathers. Let us cherish the blessings which He thereby bestowed on our Synod. J. P. M.

The Pastor and His Bible

In his address on "The Pastor and Ways of Using the Bible" Dr. James V. Claypool of the American Bible Society submits some striking paragraphs which he has permitted us to quote and which we here reprint.

". . . To understand and to utter the message of the Bible is the unique function of the Christian minister. It has priority in his call into the ministry. The Bible is the charter, the constitution, the source book of the Christian's faith. To know it, to be thoroughly familiar with it, to understand what it has to say for its time, for our time and for all time, is the indispensable equipment of the true preacher. The Bible is God calling to man. 'The minister needs to know something about many books and everything about One Book.' He may get along without many things but not without his Bible. Ministers are considered specialists in the Bible. Should the attorney be better acquainted with his lawbook, or the editorial writer with current events, or the stockbroker with his ticker and ratings, or the military leader

with his tactics and strategy than the minister with his Bible? Would that the man of God were more deeply interested in the Bible than anything else — recovering the Scriptures as THE Book for private devotion, preaching on Bible passages as well as verse texts, and meeting with his people for group study of the Bible.

"The authentic note of Christian preaching is the reproduction of the Bible message. The Bible is both ancient and modern. Its message is essentially timeless, but it is timely because of its spiritual relevance to the problems of the day. Only the Bible is able to deal adequately with modern problems. Bible preaching never runs dry or grows thin. The Bible is indeed a well of living water from which the preacher may fill his sermons full to overflowing. There are never Sundays enough in the year for the Bible truths that clamor for utterance — no, not in a lifetime.

"Sermons will not be repetitious if a minister dips into the well of unfamiliar as well as familiar books of the Bible. It is like discovering a new lode in a rich mine. The consistent and persistent study of the Bible will bring fruitful results to his other activities. The minister will experience the statement that 'The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation' and that he does 'receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.' When a minister (or any other person) reads the Bible earnestly, he hears God speaking to his heart and his conscience.

"Sermons on Bible books are likely to be among those longest and most gratefully remembered by the congregation. If we could put Bible truth into our hearts of our boys and girls, young men and young women, we shall be doing our best for them religiously. A minister who can arouse an attachment for the Bible and develop continued interest in it is feeding the souls of his people and being true to his mission. 'Let the Bible speak for itself. Let God through the Bible speak directly to you. Nothing but your best is good enough to bring to Bible reading.'"

Expository Preaching

According to *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in the number of October—December, 1947, Dallas Theological Seminary is laying much stress on expository preaching. It is the faculty of that seminary which now edits the journal mentioned. An editorial states that the seminary discovered that the standard three-year course of theology did not provide the required time for the work attempted, that is, the effort to make the future graduates adept in expository preaching. "Therefore, with some fear and trembling lest the students would not be drawn to a four-year course, the step was taken," that is, the step of adding an extra year; "and it should be said to the credit of the serious-minded young men of this country that there has been no occasion to advertise for students from that time until now. The young men saw the value of

the extra year and have welcomed and sustained it." In speaking of training for expository preaching the editorial says: "What then is needed if men are to be trained in exposition? First, they must come to know the Book itself. What can be learned in classroom study does not take the place of personal devotional study gained through years of attention to it. When study ceases, usefulness ceases. But personal study cannot be pursued with profit without a method and the background which the seminary alone can give and which serves as a guide in interpretation. Second, knowledge of original languages is essential to real progress in the knowledge of the Bible. It is only in recent years that lower ideals for ministerial service have appeared. Short courses of study have been encouraged and men graduated from these have been led to believe that they are prepared to preach provided they have zeal and claim a special degree of spiritual power. In the days of rapid growth of our country, such men have been ordained and placed in charge of churches when better trained men were not available. Recognizing the importance of the knowledge of original languages, the Dallas Theological Seminary requires an extended study in these languages which is wholly unknown in existing theological seminary courses, except it be for specializing on the part of some students." [Evidently the writer of the editorial has no knowledge of the work that Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, and other Lutheran seminaries are endeavoring to do. A.] "It was determined from the beginning that enough of the original languages should be required to prepare students for continued personal study throughout their lives with a method by which they might hope to become exegetes in their own right. In the Greek department the student who secures the standard Master's degree is required to translate the entire New Testament. The same strong emphasis is placed upon the Hebrew also. In like manner, the entire Bible is studied book by book, both for analysis and for spiritual content. Systematic theology has been and is the ground work of the knowledge of God's revelation — a theology which is based wholly on the Bible. This with the courses in the Bible itself and exegetical studies in the original languages is calculated to give the student a thorough introduction to God's Word. Such an introduction requires at least four years as prescribed in the Dallas Theological Seminary." The emphasis which the author places on the study of the Bible, and at that in the original languages, deserves approval and should encourage us conservative Lutherans to continue in the path that our theological schools have traveled for centuries. A.

Theological Observer

Items from Religious News Service.—Three women—first in the history of the Danish State Lutheran Church—were ordained as ministers at Odense, Island of Fyn, in the presence of 1,800 persons, among them 45 clergymen. The ordaining prelate was Bishop Hans Ollgaard of Odense. During the ordination, Bishop Ollgaard preached the sermon, in which he declared that as the Easter tidings were first told to women with the injunction to announce them to men, “so should we allow women to do it today in the church.” A bill permitting ordination of women in the Danish Church was passed recently in parliament despite numerous protests by clergymen and lay leaders who declared that such an innovation was contrary to Christian tradition.

Protestant churches in Spain have gained strength in the past twelve years despite “repression and violence,” Dr. Benjamin J. Bush, representative of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to the World Council of Churches’ Department of Reconstruction and Interchurch Aid, declared in Geneva. According to Dr. Bush, there are about 4,000 Plymouth Brethren in Spain; about 2,000 members of the Evangelical Church of Spain, which is a union of Evangelical, Congregationalist, Methodist, Dutch Reformed, and Presbyterians linked in tradition to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; and about 1,500 Baptists, now related especially to the Southern Baptist Convention. He estimated the total number of Protestants in Spain at approximately 30,000.

Recent religious pronouncements of Indian Socialists have taken on added significance since their decision to break away from the Congress Party, thus forming a two-party governmental system. A ten-point Socialist program put before the nation just before the split was announced, included a call for educational reform. The program demanded that educational institutions of a “denominational nature or name” be closed down or converted into non-denominational bodies, and that religious teaching in schools and colleges be stopped, except in theological schools.

Soviet authorities in Berlin have issued a license for the publication of a new monthly magazine by the Evangelical Church in Germany to be devoted to promoting religious instruction in schools. The new publication will be called *Die Christenlehre*, and the first issue will appear shortly. Each issue is expected to consist of 300,000 copies, far more circulation than that of any other religious periodical licensed by the Western powers in Berlin.

In addition to the four state-controlled colleges and two Roman Catholic institutions of higher learning, the first Evangelical school, Augustana College, has been opened in Bavaria in the American Occupation Zone. Located at Neuendettelsau-Heilbronn, the new Protestant college has been the subject of considerable debate as

to whether it should receive financial support from the state or should be entirely financed by the church. Dr. Hans Meiser, bishop of Bavaria, addressed the inaugural assembly of the college and ordained Dr. Georg Merz as rector.

The first national conference of Campus Religious Administrators was held in New Haven, Connecticut, from May 4 to 7. Over 100 college and university chaplains—more than two thirds of the total in America—attended the conference. Dean Charles W. Gilkey, dean [emeritus] of the University of Chicago's Rockefeller Chapel, was general chairman of the conference. The six major program areas of the conference included: 1. The religious climate of the campus, 2. functions and philosophy of the college chaplain, 3. development of voluntary religious activities, 4. the personal religious ministry of the chaplain, 5. the college chapel program, and 6. the educational ministry.

Sales of Seventh-Day Adventist literature in 1947 totaled more than \$10,000,000, according to a report issued in Omaha, Nebraska, by Walter P. Elliott of Washington, D. C., head of the denomination's publishing department. The sales include religious and health books and magazines sold by a corps of 1,600 colporteurs in addition to 800 student salesmen from Adventist colleges who worked during the summer months.

Federal school inspectors and teachers have been ordered to eliminate musical works of a religious character from the curricula of all Mexican schools. The order was issued by the National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature, which acts for the Mexican government in matters affecting musical instruction in the schools. *Novedades*, a Mexico City daily, charged that the Institute is controlled by Communists.

A new richly carved bronze door, which took twelve years to make and weighs six tons, was installed in Milan's Roman Catholic Cathedral on May 27, the feast of Corpus Christi. It is the first of four doors being added to the famous medieval church. Carvings on the door depict the Edict of Milan by which the Emperor Constantine, in 313, granted Christians in all parts of the Roman Empire freedom to exercise their religion. The project was executed by the Italian sculptor Arrigo Minerbi.

Celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania took place in Philadelphia during the week of May 23—30. Guests for the celebration included Archbishop Erling Eidem, primate of Sweden, and Dr. Hanns Lilje, Evangelical Lutheran bishop of Hanover, Germany.



Book Review

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

Truth vs. Dogma. By J. C. Macaulay. Moody Press, Chicago. 1946. 125 pages, 7¾×5½. \$1.50.

In nine brief chapters the author treats the following topics: Roman infallibles; Rome's suppression of the Bible; the perpetual sacrifice; the dogma of transubstantiation; the Roman priesthood; the cult of Mary; Rome's way of salvation; Rome in history; and lessons from Rome. His purpose is twofold: to help those who may have been confused by the tenets and rites of Rome and to inform Protestant believers. In the chapter on transubstantiation, he weakens his argument by presenting the Reformed view of the Eucharist. Here, as well as in his application of 2 Cor. 6:14-16 and 1 Cor. 7:39 to mixed marriages, his exegesis will be challenged by Lutheran readers. With these exceptions, this small volume may be recommended as another one of the growing number of answers to Rome's pretensions and errors. L. W. SPITZ

Church, Law, and Society. By Gustav Aulén. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1948. 114 pages, 5½×7½. \$2.00.

Gustav Aulén, since 1933 bishop of Strängnäs, Sweden, and for a time professor of theology at the universities of Upsala and Lund, has become known as the author of a number of significant theological works and as the editor of the *Swedish Theological Quarterly*. Together with Professor Anders Nygren, his colleague at the University of Lund, he became one of the founders of an influential school of thought now generally referred to as "the Lundensian theology."

Church, Law, and Society contains the Hewett lectures, delivered in 1947, in which Bishop Aulén attempts to define the Church's responsibility for Society. Declaring that there is no place for social isolation in an age of world wars and atomic bombs, he pleads for a thorough self-examination of the Church in the face of the catastrophic breakdown of justice in the present world, including the Christian countries, in order to determine the Church's share of guilt. The bishop insists that the main duty and privilege of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel and that salvation is given only by the grace of God and cannot be found by way of the Law; but he explains that though the Law is no way to God, it is the way to all human relationships and therefore an important link between Church and Society. This necessitates the theological task to make clear what exactly the function of the Law is. His analysis leads him to regard the Law of God as the source and foundation of justice and the highest thing in the life of Society. He finds no disparity between this conception of the Law and the fact that it is the Law of love. He concludes that it is the Church's duty to do all that she can to strengthen the sense of justice in the world. She is to be a living conscience of justice in relation to Society.

The bishop's enthusiasm for the ecumenical movement, manifested by his activity in relation to the World Council of Churches,

may have dictated some expressions which, inasmuch as they condone doctrinal differences, mar the general excellence of the book (cf. p. 110). But even if the strictly confessional reader cannot go with him all the way, he will find the author an instructive and stimulating companion. Bishop Aulén was near the scene of the Church's trials and triumphs during her recent struggle with the totalitarian state.

L. W. SPRIZ

The Bible Reader's Encyclopedia and Concordance. Based on the *Bible Reader's Manual* by Rev. C. H. Wright, D. D., under one alphabetical arrangement. Newly revised and brought thoroughly up to date under the editorship of Rev. W. M. Clow, D. D., Principal *emeritus* of the United Free Church College, Glasgow, London, and New York. Collins' Clear-Type Press, Glasgow, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland. 416 pages plus 17 pages of maps. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. \$1.75.

The subtitle of this work describes it quite adequately: "A complete concordance to the Bible: an index to persons, places, and subjects; chronology of the Bible; a geographical dictionary of the Bible; a dictionary of Biblical customs, antiquities, animals, and plants; the geology and mineralogy of the Bible; a glossary of archaic, obsolete, and obscure words; a summary of the books of the Bible; harmony of the Gospels; miracles and parables of the Bible; Hebrew festivals; and many other important aids to the study of the Bible." What makes this book unique is, in the first place, that it contains a vast amount of material in remarkably small compass, serving both as a concordance and as an encyclopedia, and, in the second place, that it has a number (32, to be exact) of excellent gravure illustrations which are easily worth more than half of the price of the book. Many other illustrations are given in addition. The maps are carefully done and exceedingly helpful. The articles forming the encyclopedia part of the work naturally are very short. The reader will be surprised to see how many important facts can be mentioned in a few sentences. For quick reference the work could well be given a permanent place among the paraphernalia of the pastor's desk, and being of convenient size, it deserves consideration when the traveling bag is packed prior to a trip to a pastoral conference. Negative higher criticism managed to make a little invasion (see, f. i., Genesis); generally speaking, it has been excluded.

W. ARNDT

Communism and the Church. By A. M. Rehwinkel. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. 1948. 143 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Paper cover, \$1.50. Cloth, \$2.50.

In this book Professor Rehwinkel gives a summary of the thinking and speaking in which he has engaged during the past years. Especially those who have heard him discuss Communism will appreciate this summary. His position is well documented. Current political developments corroborate the truth of many of the statements which at first sight seem partial or overdrawn.

The thesis of the book is that "Communism is, indeed, the greatest menace of the Church today" (p. 43). This statement to this reviewer needs an analysis and commentary, which Professor Rehwinkel himself gives. Communism is fully as dangerous and menacing as Professor Rehwinkel makes it. Its menace is due,

however, to a problem which has already invaded the Church — the materialism, of which Communism is the most flagrant political exponent. This fact the author ably and practically discusses in his chapter "What Can the Church Do About Communism?" (P. 116 ff.) In this chapter Professor Rehwinkel draws attention to the need for the Church itself to be a salt, a light, and leaven. The threat of Communism is so grave because the Church is already weakened by materialism and apathy. The defense against Communism is a correction of the underlying malady within the Church.

R. R. CAEMMERER

What Jesus Means to Me. By H. W. Gockel. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. 1948. 195 pages. 4×5¾. Paper cover, \$1.00. Cloth, \$1.35. Leather, \$4.00.

This is a remarkable book. It is a statement of the Christian faith couched in terms of the Christian's witness. As such it focuses on values of the Christian religion which are not so much theology and systematic as they are personal and total. In so doing, however, it becomes unusually just to the central fact of the Christian religion, namely, the faith in the redeeming and indwelling Christ.

Pastor Gockel has had unusual training and experience for writing a book like this. A parish ministry, and periods of service in which he interpreted the business of the Lutheran Hour, of Concordia Publishing House, and now of the Home Missions program of the Missouri Synod to its people, gave him unusual facility in describing the intangibles of the Christian religion in concrete and glowing terms. It is, therefore, not wholly accidental that the little book is meeting with an immediate response. It speaks well for the spiritual hunger and for the discernment of our people that this response should be so prompt.

The book should be a splendid tool for loosening the tongues of Christians toward their dear ones and neighbors on the "One Thing Needful."

R. R. CAEMMERER

The Bible Guide Book. A companion to *Bible Study for Young People and Their Teachers*. Arranged by Mary Entwistle. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 236 pages, 5½×9. \$2.50.

Books on Palestine, dwelling on the physical and the political geography of the country, especially with reference to Bible times, and describing the manner of life that obtained formerly and still to a large extent is in vogue, are deservedly popular. The present book is entitled to consideration when we look around for material in this field. The author has herself been in the Holy Land and can speak with authority. Her book has six parts, with these captions, respectively: The Land of the Bible, Life in Palestine in Bible Times, Times and Seasons, Religion and Religious Leaders, Rulers, Time Chart of the Books of the Bible. A bibliography, an index of subjects, and an index of Biblical references form the conclusion of the volume. The second part has particularly fascinating subtitles, and our printing them here will give the reader a good idea of the nature of the book: Dwellings (tents and houses), Occupations, Dress, Food, Games and Play, Musical Instruments, Writing Materials, Money, Weights and Measures, Education: Home, Schools, and Colleges. Two maps and a number of illustrations are supplied. Conservative Bible scholars will much

regret that the evolutionary view of the history of the Hebrew religion is reflected in several chapters of the book and likewise in the chronological chart of the books of the Bible. Minor blemishes that can easily be corrected are the following: On p. 34, Mount Carmel is said to rise to the east of the plain of Esdraelon (instead of to the west); on p. 48, the Sahara Desert is said to lie to the east of Egypt (instead of to the west); p. 50, the great forests of cedar are said still to stand unsurpassed for grandeur and utility as they did in the days of the Hebrew song writer (very few cedars remain); p. 87, Bethsaida Julius is a mistake (for Julias); on p. 103, doubt is thrown on the report in the Bible that angels ministered to Jesus after the Temptation (these remarks should be eliminated); on p. 108, speaking of Sarah, the author expresses the view that Sarah laughed loud, so that she was heard (nothing like that is reported in the Bible account); the remark on p. 137 with reference to manna seems to be an attempt to exclude the miraculous from the respective Bible account; on p. 212 Agrippa I and II are called "Syrian princes who governed after the Herods"—a misleading statement, because these two men belonged to the family of Herod. In conclusion, it should be said that the book is intended for boys and girls in Sunday school classes, and for that reason the presentation is simple and direct. W. ARNDT

The Church Across the Street. By R. D. Manwell and Sophia L. Fahs. The Beacon Press, Boston. 258 pages, 9½×6½. \$2.50.

This book will no doubt be widely read and warmly recommended by liberals in our country. It is well written, well illustrated, well organized around persons who founded the various denominations which the authors describe, well made up mechanically, and withal modern in its approach and orientation. Mrs. Fahs is a former lecturer at Union Theological Seminary, editor of *Children's Material* of the American Unitarian Association, member of the Editorial Board of *Parents' Magazine*, and author of numerous magazine articles and books. Dr. Manwell, who has taught zoology at Syracuse University since 1930 and has been in charge of the young people's work in the May Memorial Church School for fifteen years, is a graduate of Amherst, a veteran of World Wars I and II, and has held a Rockefeller fellowship at the School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. The basic purpose of the book is "to increase our understanding and tolerance of differing religious beliefs in our own communities." Its keynote, therefore, is a unionistic appreciation of the various religious groups in which the authors perceive definite values. Its mission is to broaden our "limited outlook," foster "friendship" for other churches, and spread an intelligent understanding of different beliefs. "The leaders of the Protestant Christian churches today are trying to unite all denominations in one great council of churches. But how can we help to bring the churches closer together if we remain ignorant of why, in the first place, they fell apart?" (P. VI.) Keeping these objectives of the authors in mind, the reader can readily understand the limitations of their book. They themselves warn those about to read the book "against expecting to find in it an adequate history of any of the various religious groups considered. It is not a church history, but merely an introduction to the larger study" (p. VII). This

inadequacy becomes apparent on almost every page of the book. What is said frequently becomes downright wrong just because of what is omitted. Understatements and half-truths, as also overstatements, in many cases, leave the reader partial either for or against a denomination and so the book does not remove bias, but rather creates all the more prejudice. Its greatest drawback is its subjectivity, for the liberal attitude of the writers renders it impossible for them to depict the antithesis between orthodoxy and heterodoxy realistically. They thus represent the "old story of salvation" in such a way that the reader is bound to find himself offended at the Gospel of man's salvation through faith in Christ, unless he is deeply rooted in the Christian truth. The authors themselves admit: "To tell it so briefly in this manner seems inadequate and unfair, for when read in its details the story becomes more impressive" (p. 9). This unfairness becomes obvious especially in such biographical sketches as those of Michael Servetus, Hosea Ballou, Joseph Smith, and others who rejected traditional Christianity and originated non-Christian cults. The authors invariably look for sheeps' clothing and close their eyes to anything that looks like wolf. Another fault is that the authors in order "to keep the book uncluttered with footnotes and with a long bibliography, have not often given the sources of facts" (p. X). This leaves the readers at their mercy, especially since the source books which they do quote are limited both in number and scope. We do not suggest that the book should not be read by our pastors, for manifestly it is one that cannot be ignored; but it must be read with care, and pastors will do well to caution against it such members as read all manner of books sold over the counter, without possessing the ability to discern between right and wrong. We mention a few details to show how carelessly the writers frequently deal with historical facts. They state that there are 256 different Protestant denominations in this country, 19 kinds of Baptists, 20 kinds of Lutherans, and 10 kinds of Presbyterians (p. VI), and they challenge all who doubt this to look it up in the Federal Census. But they say nothing about the fact that practically all major church groups are united in larger federations, and that this changes the picture of the 256 denominations considerably. The Lutherans, for example, with a few minor exceptions, may be classified either as churches of the National Lutheran Council or as churches of the Synodical Conference. Here valuable information has been omitted. Again, the authors' representation of Luther's attitude toward the rebellious peasants and the result of the peasant revolt upon the Reformer and the Lutheran Church, in general, is far from adequate (p. 29 f.). Or, take this naive statement: "When you attend a Lutheran service, however, you may find that the prayers, readings, and even the sermon are all in a foreign tongue. . . . Slowly all the churches are introducing the English language" (p. 33). This adds a touch of unintended humor to the reading of the book, but it does not speak well for the honesty or scholarship of the writers. Evidently, the last time they attended a Lutheran service was a quarter of a century or more ago. Or did they rely for their historical information on grandmothers' tales? Such statements as these — and there are many of the kind in the book — leave the reader with the impression that the book is neither ecclesiastically sound nor historically depend-

able. By the way, Capital University is the westernmost Lutheran college of which the authors know. But they do know of the Walther League, though faintly. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Our Synod and Its Work. A reader for Lutheran schools prepared and published by the Board of Education of the Ev. Luth. Wisconsin Synod. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. 223 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$, cloth binding. \$1.25.

This well-written and profusely illustrated volume affords a fine insight into the history, organization, program, and institutions, both educational and charitable, of our sister Synod. It is intended primarily for use in its Christian day schools and should prove a great blessing by giving its youth such a thorough acquaintance with the nature and work of the organization. It would seem, however, that the language could well be much simpler if the book is to carry out its noble mission effectively. O. E. SOHN

Prayer and the Common Life. By Georgia Harkness. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 1948. 224 pages, $5\frac{5}{8} \times 8\frac{5}{8}$. \$2.50.

Georgia Harkness is one of Methodism's leading figures. She is a minister in its church and one of its chief representatives in the ecumenical movement. At present she is professor of applied theology at Garrett Biblical Institute.

This is a remarkably fine book. The Lutheran reader will apply a more specific doctrine of the Atonement to her section on "In Christ's name," and he will find some of her emphases, such as attitudes to race and the problem of world peace, disproportionate. These considerations will not outweigh the fact that the book speaks with fine common sense and with clear insight into the Word of God on the great questions of prayer—its fundamental character, its special problems, and its techniques in private and in public. Miss Harkness does not pussyfoot about some of the great questions of prayer. She furthermore speaks to the common Christian who is on his way to the improvements in his faith and prayer, and not merely to veterans of prayer. The discerning pastor will profitably employ this volume in thinking through the answers about prayer to the questions which his own little people ask. R. R. CAEMMERER

Better Ways of Growing Up. By Crawford and Woodward. The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia. 1948. 270 pages, $6 \times 9\frac{1}{4}$. \$3.00.

John E. Crawford is professor of psychology and director of guidance at Wagner College, New York, and is an expert in psychological testing. Luther E. Woodward was a pastor in the United Lutheran Church, is also trained in psychiatric social work, and is now field consultant to the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. The book surveys the origin of problems in young people and seeks to provide means for diagnosis as well as guidance and improvement through the difficult years from childhood to marriage.

The book is written directly to the level of the adolescent. It will be interesting to discover whether it will serve its purpose better in the hands of the young person, or as a book of sources

and guidance for the counselor. In view of the scope of the book, this reviewer imagines that it will serve best in the latter respect.

Pastors will find this book thoroughly valuable for understanding teen agers, for developing discussions and quizzes for groups, and for counseling individuals on that age level. The psychological materials are unusually well assembled and presented.

The two chapters on the religious basis, 13 and 14, will demand special supplement and new approach by the pastor. In the effort to provide as general a relation to Christian doctrine as possible, the authors have actually made these sections less concrete and stimulating than the others and have omitted much of the dynamic of the life in Christ which the able pastor will want to bring to bear upon these problems.

The book is handsomely printed and should be most useful.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:

Children of the Sands. By Allene Albrecht. Illustrated by Chas. A. Morgenthaler. 24 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. 25 cents.

Amalak Is a Hero. By Allene Albrecht. Illustrated by Chas. A. Morgenthaler. 24 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7$. 25 cents.

Portals of Prayer. No. 83. **Walking the Highways of God.** Meditations from Isaiah. Daily Devotions from May 17, 1948, to July 3, 1948. By Rev. Alfred Doerffler. Single copies, 10 cents each; 60 cents per dozen, \$4.50 per hundred, postpaid.

Dein Stecken und Stab. Kurze Andachten fuer die Zeit vom 17. Mai bis zum 3. Juli 1948. Price same as above.

From Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York 11, N. Y.:

The Power Within Us. By Eugene L. Smith. Guidance or Creative Christian Living. 185 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.75.

Poems for the Great Days. Edited by Thomas Curtis Clark and Robert Earle Clark. 245 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. \$2.50.

Five-Minute Stories from the Bible. By E. Jerry Walker. 128 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.25.

What Shall I Preach? By George Brown Thomas. 2,200 thought-stimulating titles and texts for sermons. 239 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. \$2.50.

Think on These Things. By Constance Garrett. 32 deeply spiritual meditations which will bring every reader a closer companionship with God. 192 pages, $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6$. \$1.00.

From Association Press, New York 17, N. Y.:

This Man and This Woman. By Frederick W. Brink. A Guide for Those Contemplating Marriage. 79 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.50.

From Moody Press, Chicago 10, Ill.:

Grace. By Lewis Sperry Chafer. 373 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$2.00.

From William Collins Sons and Company, New York:

The Greatest Thing in the World. By Henry Drummond. With introduction by J. Y. Simpson. 96 pages, $2\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$. 50 cents. — Also one 317 pages, $4 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.25.

From Fleming H. Revell Company, New York:

Bible Study by Books. By Henry T. Sell, D.D. 273 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{4}$. 75 cents.

From Van Kampen Press, Chicago 5, Ill.:

The Disciplines of Life. By V. Raymond Edman, Ph.D. 253 pages, $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. \$2.00.

From The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 7, Pa.:

Men Called Him Master. By Elwyn Allen Smith (for Junior high school boys and girls). 186 pages, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$. \$2.00.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

The Soul Winner. By Charles H. Spurgeon. Condensed and edited by David Otis Fuller. 151 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.50.



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